

## divinity

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](http://archiveofourown.org/works/30541542) at <http://archiveofourown.org/works/30541542>.

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Category:	<a href="#">M/M</a>
Fandom:	<a href="#">Minecraft (Video Game)</a> , <a href="#">Video Blogging RPF</a>
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Additional Tags:	<a href="#">Clay   Dream is DreamXD (Video Blogging RPF)</a> , <a href="#">Emotional Hurt/Comfort</a> , <a href="#">Emotional/Psychological Abuse</a> , <a href="#">Emotional Manipulation</a> , <a href="#">Emotional Hurt</a> , <a href="#">its a Lot okay</a> , <a href="#">Hurt/Comfort</a> , <a href="#">Hurt No Comfort</a> , <a href="#">Aftermath of Torture</a> , <a href="#">More tags to be added</a> , <a href="#">Kidnapping</a> , <a href="#">Confinement</a> , <a href="#">It Gets Worse Before It Gets Better</a> , <a href="#">Wingfic</a> , <a href="#">Possesive DreamXD</a> , <a href="#">there's not a tag for that so i'm gonna make one</a> , <a href="#">You're Welcome</a> , <a href="#">Sleep Deprivation</a> , <a href="#">Panic Attacks</a> , <a href="#">This Is Not Going To Go The Way You Think</a> , <a href="#">Resurrection</a> , <a href="#">if you noticed i added that tag no you did not</a>
Language:	English
Series:	Part 3 of <a href="#">spoom's dnf</a>
Stats:	Published: 2021-04-08 Updated: 2021-07-22 Chapters: 25/28 Words: 41372

## divinity

by [spoom](#)

### Summary

DreamXD pushed his hand hard over George's mouth, attempting to stop any further attempts to call for help. The experiment struggled a couple seconds longer before breaking, warm tears falling down his face, puddling in the crevice of the god's golden hands.

"Where am-" he coughed, his words muffled and quiet.

"Shh," the deity brought his hand away from George's mouth, moving to scrape his nails through dark brown hair. "It's okay."

or

DreamXD is keeping George unconscious in the End, and manipulating his dreams.

### Notes



CW: this fic deals with manipulation and derealization, and if you aren't comfy with that pls take caution!!

See the end of the work for more [notes](#)



# I

It was a cool summer day for George. At some point he'd begun to wonder if the seasons would ever change, the weather had been perfect almost every day for months now, only the occasional thunderstorm causing him any sort of distress. He'd been out gathering materials today, hoping to improve the community house. Looking down at his reflection in a small puddle, he sighed. Borrowed netherite armor weighed heavy on his shoulders, and he was ready to take a break.

Subtle footsteps came to a stop beside him.

"George," Niki spoke, her tone patient, "are you sure you're not asleep right now? Are you dreaming again?"

George turned around. "What?"

"Are you sure you're awake?"

George looked puzzled. "Uh, yeah, I'm sure," he paused. Niki hadn't stopped staring.

"I *feel* awake."

Niki hummed, smiled gently, and left to do something else. *That was weird*, George thought. *Really weird*. He tried to brush it off, there was no way he was *actually* asleep after all.

-

Wrong.

Somewhere nobody else could reach, a restless god watched over his sleeping captive. There was no day or night in the dimly lit dimension, and DreamXD had been sure to keep it that way. Bright lights could wake his friend. He couldn't have that.



He'd been keeping George here for a while now, and had grown fond of the way his chest rose and fell as he slept, the way his eyes would shut tighter when something in whatever dream he was having upset him. Sometimes, on special days, he'd place a hand on his friend's chest, feeling for what George had told him was called a "heartbeat". Always careful not to disturb the brunette, he'd only allow himself brief, light contact.

George hadn't been fully awake in months. There had been close calls, times where an enderman had been a bit too loud, or disturbed DreamXD in some way. Luckily, George had only fussed a bit over this, his eyes barely fluttering open before falling closed again.

Sometimes, George would talk in his sleep. DreamXD liked to muse over the way his hands would twitch as if he were gesturing about what he was discussing, it was entertaining to him.

When he was sure everything was safe, that his friend had no chance of waking up, he'd visit him. Sit down next to the comfy prison and put himself in George's head, invade whatever vision the mortal was experiencing and interact with him as though everything was normal and he wasn't actually keeping him unconscious.

DreamXD had spent hours in George's mind before, it was so interesting to him. What George was dreaming about barely matched the reality of what was happening on the outside. George had created an ideal world for himself, perfect in seemingly every way. But, DreamXD found he wasn't quite able to recreate his human companions. Something just wasn't right with the way the people George had dreamed up acted. It was like they were reading off a script, all their laughs sounded the same.

DreamXD stood up, careful to pull up the sleeves of his robe as he approached the sleeping boy. Reaching out, he gently pushed the dark hair away from George's forehead. It was getting long, he thought to himself. He needed to cut it soon. The mortal's only downside was how much maintenance he required.

He needed to wake George up enough to feed him soon, as well. You can only keep a human alive on potions for so long, he'd found. George was getting thinner, and DreamXD didn't want to lose his progress with the boy if he died.

Taking a second to focus, the god took a look at George's mental state. Just another dream about mining. *Well* , he reasoned, *now is no worse a time than any other* .



Reaching into his inventory, he brought out a healing potion and some golden apples. George would probably wake up a bit, but not enough to fight back, he thought. An elevated grin worked its way onto DreamXD's face. He hadn't gotten to physically touch George, the *real* George, much in months. He softly rested his fingertips on the brunette's arm. No reaction. George was still very much asleep. This was safe.

He gently slid his hands under the boy's back, tilting him up into a sitting position. George stirred, mumbled something incomprehensible, and went still once more. DreamXD dragged a couple pillows behind his captive's back, sitting him up like a doll. He hadn't thought George would be this easy to maneuver, and was pleasantly surprised. Maybe he'd be able to do this more often, now that he knew it was safe.

An enderman walked up to the two, rasped out a couple words, and teleported away before DreamXD could shoo him off.

The god sliced up his apples, making them small enough for George to swallow easily without chewing much. He'd do the most important thing first, he decided. Couldn't have his friend starving to death.

Maybe someday, when George let go of all his other friends, DreamXD could do this while he was awake. It would be nice, he thought. George loving him only, grateful to him for everything he had. To hear his actual voice thanking him for the food-

His chest suddenly felt quite warm.

He carefully lifted his mortal's head back, taking a second to admire the relaxed expression on his face. He swiped his thumb over the smaller's lips, and George tensed a bit. That's not what he'd wanted to happen, but oh well. There were other ways. DreamXD softly pulled on his chin, and George's mouth opened.

Success.

The experiment wasn't hard to control, DreamXD only had to push at his jaw a bit to get him to chew, and he swallowed on his own. He seemed to be a little less asleep than before, but that was okay, as long as he wasn't fully conscious.

With the apple reduced to nothing but a core, DreamXD let George's head fall back down to his chest, looking for the scissors he'd brought with him. A small whimper stopped him in his tracks.



He whipped around, turning to see his human shivering, eyes barely open, breathing quicker than DreamXD thought possible. Awake. His experiment was awake. In two quick steps he was on him, a hand on George's back, sliding up and down, something he'd seen the human do with Bad in one of his dreams. It had seemed to work then, why wouldn't it work here?

George jolted at the touch, a sharp gasp filled his lungs. His teary eyes shot completely open, and his legs kicked at enemies that weren't there. DreamXD jerked his arms away, unsure of what to do. He frantically searched around for something to put George back to sleep when the other finally was able to focus on him and take in his surroundings. A broken yell tore it's way out of the prisoner's throat. Oh, *shit*.

"Wh- where the fuck-" he gasped out.

DreamXD jumped to cover George's eyes. "Shh- George. This is a dream, calm down-"

"No, get off-" George struggled to get off the bed and, finding that DreamXD had a hold on him, pushed away the god, hard.

This was a horrible decision. Soft hands turned into clawed talons within seconds, scraping at George's arms as he was tugged back against his captor.

"Don't fucking move, George," DreamXD hissed, anger distorting his voice.

George screamed again, his voice broken and weak from lack of use. DreamXD was pretty sure he could make out 'Sapnap' and 'Dream' somewhere in the noise, before it became frantic gasps and sobs. The air was poison, and his human was cringing at every exhale.

DreamXD pushed his hand hard over George's mouth, attempting to stop any further attempts to call for help. The experiment struggled a couple seconds longer before breaking, warm tears falling down his face, puddling in the crevice of the god's golden hands.

"Where am-" he coughed, his words muffled and quiet.

"Shh," DreamXD brought his hand away from George's mouth, moving to scrape his nails through



dark brown hair. "It's okay."

George looked up at him, confusion and fear carved into his features. His eyes were already beginning to slip closed, the fatiguing effects of the End catching back up to him. As he fell, DreamXD readjusted the pillows around him, carefully setting him back down.

George sunk into bed, his body felt so heavy. Dread pulled at his heart, and a softened hand reached up to wipe his tears away.

"What..." George sighed, his shoulders relaxing. He was barely holding on. The panic slipped out of his face, he was still again.

DreamXD smiled. His experiment was safe.

"Nearly hurt yourself there..." he chastised.

But George looked so fragile, so innocent in his sleep. How was this the same person he'd just had to physically restrain only moments ago? His face was still red from crying, and the god almost felt sorry for him. George needed some more work, but he wasn't hopeless. He just needed to learn.

"I'll forgive you," he decided.

Things weren't okay yet though, and he knew it. George would wake up in his little mind prison again with ideas about what was really happening, and this was dangerous. How was he supposed to gain his friend's trust if he possessed such memories? He'd need to correct it.

He sat down beside the bed, readying himself to do damage control.



## II

### Chapter Summary

damage control.

### Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

George woke up crying, pushing back hands that weren't there, screaming for help he wouldn't get. He could still feel claws on his scalp, scratching back and forth in a painful attempt to soothe him. God, he hadn't had a nightmare that bad in forever.

Staring into the darkness of his bedroom, his breathing gradually slowed down, his mind still replaying the nightmare like a broken record, desperately trying to process it. His covers felt different than they had when he'd gone to sleep, he thought. This bed was less welcoming than before. He stopped. But when *had* he gone to sleep? The last thing he could remember was walking home. His chest tightened at the realization.

With shaky hands he reached to turn on his bedside lamp, the sun hadn't quite come up yet but he needed to be out of the dark, to ensure himself that that monster, that *thing*, wasn't anywhere near him. The golden light flooded his room and illuminated his windows. He stared through them, looking out to make sure nothing was standing behind the glass, staring back. Finding nothing, he let out a sigh.

It was just a dream.

A loud knocking shook the room, and yanked the relief from George's chest. In two seconds he was out of bed, pressing himself against a wall, trying to get out of sight of his windows. He brought a hand over his mouth to keep himself from screaming. A sharp clicking noise brought tears to his eyes, and he collapsed, paralyzed.

The door opened slowly, creaking on its hinges.

"George...?"



DreamXD.

“Why are you on the floor?”

George tensed, working up the strength to face the visitor. “Why are you here?”

“I thought I heard shouting,” the god replied. “Why?,” his voice shifted, something more dangerous taking over, “Do you not want me here?”

George recognized it immediately, pulling himself off the floor and backing away. “You...”

“I what?” DreamXD stepped closer.

George can't find the words to explain his overwhelming urge to bolt out the door, to take himself far away from the god standing in front of him. He's shaking, and he knows DreamXD notices.

“Are you okay George?” the echoey, safe tone was back.

“I have to go,” George excused, stepping past the deity, rushing to be outside.

The sun had finally risen enough to turn the grass to thin golden lines, and George breathed a sigh of relief at the sight. Without much thought, he started sprinting away from his house. He was wearing the same clothes he had been yesterday, he noticed.

“George!” DreamXD called after him.

George didn't care about leaving the god behind anymore. He couldn't give less of a shit. He just wanted to see someone he actually knew, someone who's voice didn't give him nightmares.

He made his way into the nearby forest, and looked around.



“Niki!” he yelled.

No response.

“Bad!”

He walked further into the forest, carefully examining his surroundings for any sign of his friends. They were just here yesterday, getting materials to improve the community house. Where was everyone?

“Is anyone there?!”

His breathing was quick again.

A familiar voice rang out behind him.

“Hey George!”

Dream.

“Dream?”

He turned and stepped in the direction the voice had come from, and was suddenly engulfed in darkness. He gasped, jumping back. The dark followed. Spinning around, he searched for the trees he’d just been standing under. Nothing. He looked down. The grass underneath his feet was gone, as if had burnt away in seconds, replaced by black ash. He looked up. No sun, no sky, just dark.

“George! Over here!” Dream’s voice chimed from behind him.

He spun around. “Hello?”



Nobody was there.

“Dream?”

“Nope,” DreamXD replied, just inches away from George’s ear. A hand materialized out of the dark, reaching around his arm and pulling him backwards. Dull nails dug into his skin. DreamXD stood beside him, and George could tell from his tone that he wasn’t happy.

George squeaked, the sudden contact unwelcome and uncomfortable.

“You left the door open,” his friend spat, and it sounded like an accusation.

George yanked his arm back, but the deity’s grip didn’t falter.

“Let go,” he pleaded. “You’re hurting me.”

“I’m *hurting* you?” the god scoffed.

George was on edge, everything was still dark, his friends were nowhere to be found, and the subject of his nightmares was refusing to let go of his arm. A curtain of panic dropped over him, and he was suddenly very aware of his own heartbeat. Things were starting to move in slow motion. He could faintly hear himself shouting, begging to be left alone.

“What did I do?!” his friend screamed back, voice barely comprehensible.

“You- you don’t understand, I-” a sob cut off his sentence, and he tugged his arm back as hard as he could. “Why is it so dark?!”

Just like that, the soft, echoey tone flooded back into DreamXD’s voice. “Dark? George, the sun just came up.”

George was about to refute this, scrunching up his face in stress, but when he opened his eyes there was light again. DreamXD was blocking the sun from his eyes, but it was very obviously daytime.



George was stunned.

“No- It was just dark...”

DreamXD sighed, and loosened his grip on the mortal’s arm. “George, I think you should rest today. You seem overwhelmed.”

George shook his head. “I need to talk to Bad and Niki.”

“No you don’t.”

The brunette blinked.

“...What?”

“How much time have you just spent shouting for them?,” DreamXD hissed, his tone harsh. “And they still haven’t come, or made any move to reply. You were screaming so loud this morning that it’s likely even the nether could hear you. And who came to check on you?” the deity paused. “Me. Both times. *Not* them. They don’t care about you, George. They’re not your friends. I’m your friend, we promised that.”

George looked up, taken aback. He felt a tear make its way down his face.

“They’re scared of you. Of the power you have. They have more fear of you than they have love. That should tell you enough.”

The world flickered back to black, and George fell to the ground. DreamXD put a hand on his shoulder, crouching down to look at him. George’s hands shook, his confusion stressing him.

“What’s going on? W-why is everything so dark?” George sobbed.

DreamXD cupped the shorter’s face, turning his head to face him. “Oh, you poor thing.”



The god slipped his hand down, grabbing onto George's shoulder.

"Come on, let's get you home."

George sniffles, standing up, not bothering to push DreamXD off. "No..."

"No?"

"I can't see. It's too dark. I can't-" he sobbed, bringing his hands up to rub at his eyes, trying to fix himself.

"Shhh, it's okay. I'll help you." An arm found its way around his torso.

He leaned against DreamXD, feeling utterly broken. Why was everything so *wrong* ? His eyes hurt so much, like he'd been looking directly into the sun instead of trying to find it. He just wanted to wake up okay again. The idea of sleep had him replaying the nightmare in his head once again, and he shivered.

George turned to look up at the one guiding him home. Fear traced its icy hands around his neck, but held his cries in his throat, and let the god lead him home.

## Chapter End Notes

ayyee another chapter woo woo. had an interesting friday, so it's a little late. might edit the first chapter to say dremxd instead of dream, so if you notice that, no you didn't. thank you so much for reading, hope everyone's having a nice day :]]]



### III

#### Chapter Summary

bet you didn't expect this.

#### Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

It took them what felt like forever to get back. George waited for the inevitable change in the slope of the ground, something to tell him he was at least near his home, but it never came. Nauseous from the constant dark, George felt himself tiring.

DreamXD offered to carry him, but he stubbornly refused, unnerved by the idea. George kept tripping over the taller's cloak however, and when DreamXD revealed they still had a ways to go, he solemnly agreed to let himself be lifted off the ground. *It shouldn't be taking this long*, he thought.

The darkness surrounding them began to pull on his eyelids. Why was he even keeping them open at this point? He buried his face into the cloth of his escort, and imagined bright sunshine illuminating all that he couldn't see, all he needed to do was uncover his eyes and he would surely see it waiting for him. The soothing fantasy made his head swim, and his mouth tasted like sleep.

The gentle muffled noise of DreamXD's footsteps lulled him down, jingling gold chains singing him a lullaby that made him feel safe and mused.

*Click.*

His eyes shot open.

There was his bedroom, lamp still on, bed unmade. DreamXD looked down at him, watching to see his reaction.

"Uhm.." George turned in the gods arms, and DreamXD put him down, getting the message.



“I can see again,” he mumbled.

George was suddenly aware of a hand on his back, leading him towards his bed. He couldn't be bothered to resist, stepping forward to drop onto the soft comforter. He let his eyes slip closed.

“Tired already, George? It's not even midday.”

George groaned into his pillow, exhausted and confused. DreamXD sat down next to him, putting a hand on his back.

“I'll get you some healing potions,” the god said, rubbing back and forth, “maybe that'll fix whatever's wrong.”

George struggled to pull himself completely into bed, not processing what his friend was saying. The hand on his back was suddenly absent, and he whined in protest.

“One minute!” DreamXD reassured, his echoed voice light and amused sounding.

It didn't take a minute for that hand to be back, curled around his side, turning him over.

“Come on, drink this.”

George scooted up, sitting slightly straighter. He took the bottle from the god, and tipped it against his lips. The second the bright red liquid hit his tongue, he was cringing and coughing, the bitter taste unbearable. A tired sigh rushed out of his friend.

“Don't spit it out George. That's not gonna help you,” DreamXD sighed, taking the bottle back. He pressed his hand against the human's chest again, pushing him against his backboard. George tried to speak as the bottle was placed back against his lips and turned upwards. His eyebrows knitted together, and he slammed his eyes shut as the unpleasant flavor soaked into his tongue and rooted itself around his teeth.

“Swallow.”



George obeyed, there was nothing else to do.

The hand on his chest relented, and he swallowed another mouthful of the pink vinegar before he was let rest. When he looked back up to DreamXD, his earthy eyes were tear-polished.

“You’re welcome.”

George lightly pushed the taller’s shoulder, disgusted and depleted. He sunk back down into the comfort of his light blue bed sheets, averting the eyes of the tall spectator sitting next to him. The sun’s light faded gently, presumably from a passing cloud. Though, it wouldn’t surprise him if rain was on it’s way.

An enderman screeched- presumably outside his window, but it sounded closer. He turned to check, and found nothing. Gentle rain pattered on the glass, which he took as a simple explanation.

“Why did you run away this morning?” DreamXD questioned.

George paused. “I don’t know,” *Yes you do.* “Weird dream.”

“I’m not-”

George already knew what words were coming. “That’s not what I meant.”

“Oh.”

So...George thought it was a dream. DreamXD smiled to himself.

“Sorry,” he said.

George could swear he heard insincerity in DreamXD’s tone, and felt a twinge of anger. “It’s fine,” he breathed, rolling back over to sleep.



DreamXD let him fall.

The next week went by quickly, for both the experiment and his “friend”. DreamXD made sure to restrain George’s physical body, just in case what happened wasn’t just a one-time thing. He looked for ways to feed the mortal again without waking him. He’d decided to give up on cutting George’s hair, there was just no way to do it without risking a wake-up.

George built a guest room onto his house, but still didn’t see any of his friends again. The darkness didn’t come back, but George refused to let himself leave his home without a lantern again. He was more reserved around DreamXD now, holding a slight grudge after the potion incident.

He’d watched DreamXD fly around his house a couple times, dropping gifts and supplies while he worked. He felt a slight twinge of jealousy, flying looked a lot easier than walking miles every day to get wood. He brought this up to DreamXD in passing one day, just to make conversation. It was only a compliment.

“Your wings are cool. I wish I could fly.”

“You do?” DreamXD sounded excited.

“Yeah, I could probably do things faster if I could.”

DreamXD smiled, happy over the compliment. An idea was forming in his head.

“I’ve got to go,” he announced, pulling himself off the ground, not waiting for George to reply.

He faintly heard a ‘oh, bye!’ called after him, and grinned as he flew out of the human’s line of sight. Letting himself out the back door of George’s mind, he watched as the world faded back to the dimly-lit reality of the End, and lifted himself from the floor next to George’s bed.

He could do this quickly, get it done before George had the chance to react or wake up. He just had



to be careful about it.

Without overthinking, the deity slid his hand under the curve of his captive's neck. This would require some physically uncomfortable changes to George's body, but he knew it would be worth it. His touch left gold marks on George's skin, and he grinned as the gift sunk into his friend's skin. The brunette gasped just barely, he was definitely feeling this. Feeling slightly guilty, DreamXD let his thumb swipe up and down in a (hopefully) comforting motion as he bent and twisted George's muscles to fit what they were offered.

He'd have to adjust George's positioning later, he noted. His gift couldn't finish forming properly with the brunette laying on his back.

A glass tear slipped down George's cheek. Satisfied with his work, the god pulled back his hand. George slumped back further into the position he'd been in. DreamXD smiled.

George couldn't be mad at him upon awakening, not when the god had given him something he'd said he so wanted. Wings were going to suit the brunette, he decided.

-

Somewhere, in the confines of George's mind, the brunette was dragging his nails across his back, trying to rid himself of the stabbing pain splitting through the skin there.

## Chapter End Notes

haha surprise homies you're getting winged george au. i had a good week, hope you all did too. thinking about making a post where ya'll can suggest writing prompts you'd like to read, so if you're maybe interested in that let me know! uhhh, as alwaysss thank you for reading, and maybe leave a kudos or comment if you enjoyed :))



## IV

### Chapter Summary

sapnap and dream angst for the soul

### Chapter Notes

heads up, this chapter contains physical violence and abuse.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

“Why are you on the ground?”

George was silent, slumped over himself, arms hugged tight around his chest. DreamXD knew he'd hurt the boy, but not this much. Was pain really this powerful? He'd thought George could handle almost anything. During his initial research, the human had only become weak when he'd been denied air. He lightly patted the brunette's shoulder.

“You can get up now, George. You're okay,” he spoke, keeping his tone lighthearted.

The mortal flinched, hard. When DreamXD looked closer, he could see that George was shaking, could hear his quick hitched breaths. Mortal pain looked very unpleasant, he decided.

He brought his hand back down, this time on George's back, following him when he tried to get away from the contact. He got down on his knees, trying to get a look at his friend's face, and frowned at the sight.

George's face was red and tear stained, his eyes screwed shut, his jawline prominent from how hard he was gritting his teeth. DreamXD had never seen his experiment in such a state of distress. He moved closer, wrapping his arm around the boy. The back of his neck was red and a bit bloody, as if George had been scratching at the skin there. With his other hand, he reached up to touch it.

A sharp inhale shattered the silence, and George found his voice again. “N- no, hurts.”



“I know it hurts, why did you do it?” The god’s tone was suddenly harsh, accusatory.

“Did- I didn’t-”

DreamXD roughly grabbed the human’s hand, bringing it up to examine the red-tinted nails. “You *did*,” he whispered.

“No, you don’t u-” a sob ended his sentence too soon. “Something’s wrong-”

*Smack .*

DreamXD hit him, right where the marks were. George’s mouth opened in a silent scream, every sensation was replaced by stinging red-hot pain. The tears began to fall again, and George didn’t register the change of lighting as he was pulled into a god’s chest, lifted from the ground, and dropped again. He didn’t register the noises coming from his own throat, the hands grabbing at his clothes, or the taste of blood spreading across his tongue. Everything was bright white, and the air was ringing in his ears, his body’s own warning sirens stuck on a single note, barely wavering.

DreamXD watched as the boy he called his friend stiffened and relaxed before finally dropping into quiet stillness. The god groaned.

“Don’t play games with me George.”

He stood up, his cold shadow draping over the George's lifeless body. He drew back his leg, and the dangerous static in his voice returned. “Get up, you’re only hurting yourself.”

He brought his foot forward, kicking George in the ribs. George coughed.

A moment of silence passed, and George thought the god might’ve left for a minute when he was lifted off the ground once again. Strong, solid arms cradled him, yet he’d never felt less safe. He willed himself not to fight this time, terrified of the possible consequences.

DreamXD made no move to take him anywhere, and when George turned up to see his face, he found the god staring straight back. The salt of his tears burned at his scratched face.



“W- why-?” he breathed, his voice tight.

DreamXD shook his head, annoyed by the query. “I tried to help, and you fought me. I do everything for you, I give you everything,” he began walking towards George’s home, “and you still don’t trust me.”

George jumped. He buried his face in DreamXD’s robes, his knuckles white at his grip on the green cloth. The deity seemed so much larger, so much stronger now.

They were in the mortal’s room within seconds, something George knew shouldn’t be possible. He was being leaned back onto his bed again, panic scaping at his lungs as he found himself unable to hold on to the robes of his protector/abuser.

DreamXD leaned down. “Let go.”

George didn’t think twice, releasing his grip and dropping onto the bed. He could hear the god digging around in chests, and walk back over to him. *Oh*. The taller carried a healing potion. Hastily ripping out the cork, he poured the contents of the bottle over the human’s face, uncaring of George’s physical comfort.

The room went quiet as George’s skin sewed itself back together. Purple bruises faded back to clear skin, and George shivered at the relief. A cool hand cupped his cheek.

“Does that feel better?”

Hesitant, but afraid of not responding, George nodded. DreamXD pushed his hand into the soft brown hair near George’s ear, scratching gently.

“I’m going to take care of you.” Something about the way he said it made George’s heart drop.

George heard a clicking noise. His head snapped in the direction of the source. There were no trees outside, nothing that could be hitting the windows. He didn’t even really need to confirm this, the sound was familiar enough to him for its source to be obvious. DreamXD had locked the door.



Turning to the god caging him in, George's eyes looked different. DreamXD could see the adrenaline flooding in, and felt what was coming next.

“George, don't.”

A warning.

Too late. George was already fighting the green-clad god off of him, clambering to get himself off the bed. He slammed into the door and yanked at the handle, his arms shaking. It didn't budge.

The lights of his bedroom dimmed, and he saw that the sunlight outside had gone, replaced with blank darkness. The golden light from his lamp flickered gently.

He continued tugging at the door, finally ripping it off its hinges. The dull blue shine of obsidian crushed his lungs, and hopeless panic drenched him. All coherent thought receded, and he sank to the floor.

In the dreadful wake of it all, where the lamp's light shined brightest, DreamXD sat on the bed, watching.

-

Somewhere far away from all of this, a despondent prisoner was sat across from his former friend, refusing to speak.

“Dream, this is what's fair,” Sapnap was exhausted from trying to get a response. “You should try to accept it. You're acting like a fucking child.”

Dream went to write something on the sheet of paper he'd been answering with, but Sapnap tore it away, turning it to ash between his fingers.

“If you have something to say, say it.”



Dream scowled, stubborn as ever. Sapnap couldn't help but feel a bit grateful at the sight, after the months of distant stares and blank looks, any emotion Dream showed was a welcoming sight.

It was obvious at this point that he wasn't getting words, though. He knew this. He'd known this.

He begrudgingly got up, and grabbed another book. "Sorry. What did you want to tell me then?" He dropped the book in front of Dream.

The room was still for a second as Dream guided his pen to the paper. He hesitated, hovering just above the page. A strange expression worked its way onto his face, something Sapnap hadn't seen in ages, something that looked a lot like nervousness. The pen made small scratching noises as he jotted down his question.

He didn't immediately slide the book over to Sapnap as he typically did, instead taking some time to observe the way the words sat on the page, rereading them again and again as if he was trying to memorize their pattern.

Sapnap reached over, concerned. Only halfway, he wasn't looking to get slapped.

"Dream?"

The prisoner didn't look up, but pushed the book across the table they were sat at. Sapnap swept his eyes over the words.

*Where's George?*

He closed his eyes. If he was honest with himself, he was surprised Dream hadn't asked sooner. George was the one person Dream still seemed to be fond of, even with all his detached "no love/no loss" bullshit. Even Tommy had told him that Dream still cared about George, why would that fact change? He knew he shouldn't tell the truth. He hadn't seen Dream angered since he'd been dragged into this cell, but that didn't mean it couldn't happen.



Dream tapped the table. Once. Twice, harder. The silence was unnerving him, his need for an answer had hit him with a sudden urgency.

Sapnap looked up. “Dream...”

His tone gave him away, Dream could tell something was off. He stood up, putting both hands flat on the table, silently begging him to look up, to continue the sentence.

“George is, uh, kinda...missing. We haven’t seen him in a while,” Sapnap admitted. It was no use trying to lie.

Everything was suddenly much quieter. An eerie feeling crept into Sapnap’s stomach. He couldn’t find it in him to look back at Dream. The one person he cared about, and they were missing. It wasn’t Sapnap’s fault, but he felt guilty nonetheless.

An exasperated sob shattered the silence like a spark plug on a glass window. Sapnap’s head shot up. There was no way Dream, *his Dream*, was crying. But Sapnap looked up and *oh*, he was.

“Oh-”

The book flew off their table, and disappeared behind the lava wall with a small hiss. Sapnap flinched and looked back to Dream.

The blonde’s hands were shaking. Bad. Hesitantly, Sapnap reached forward, taking them into his own. He pressed his palms over the prisoner’s cold hands, applying slight pressure. Bad had done this for him when he was younger, when he’d been upset over burning something he wasn’t supposed to, or sad about scaring someone he cared about with his fire. It had always calmed him, he hoped it would work now, too. Dream wasn’t pulling away, so he was optimistic.

“When,” Dream breathed, his unused voice quiet and dark.

Sapnap was so shocked to hear that voice again that he nearly jumped, but somehow managed to keep his tone gentle. “I mean, probably a while ago...”



Silence paused them, and Sapnap for a split second Sapnap felt like Dream was hearing him, like they were both present, like maybe his friend might be in there somewhere-

The blonde yanked his hands away. "I don't need you."

Sapnap's dim hope snapped, like a rubber band stretched too tight, receding into him even further than it had been before he'd visited.

Ah . He brought up his hands, and stepped back. "Okay, just-"

"Get out."

Sapnap frowned at the words. *Of course* , he thought. Dream hadn't changed. Dream didn't need him any more than he had moments ago, of course he wasn't going to value him. And Sapnap didn't need him to, he had Karl and Quackity, who showed him more respect than Dream, even months before he was imprisoned. They loved him more than Dream ever had. More than he ever *would* . He didn't need the taller's approval, they weren't even friends anymore. He couldn't even figure out why he'd continued to visit, when all he'd ever been met with was loathing silence. He could leave right now without another word and never return, never care again, never worry about seeing the person he'd grown up around, who'd been his closest friend since childhood, the same person he couldn't even look in the eyes anymore. He knew he could. But, still.

"I'm glad you're talking again, even if you're being an asshole."

He didn't look back at Dream. He called for Sam, and left without another word.

## Chapter End Notes

heya :]] it's been a long week for me, so this chapter took a while. i'm excited to hear what you guys think about this though. i really do feel like my writing has improved as i've worked on these chapters, and it makes me happy. anyways, hope you all are doing good :]] as always, feel free to leave a comment or kudos if you enjoyed, it



means the world to me :) <3



## Chapter Summary

it is going down, for i am yelling timber

## Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

It had been hours since the pair had initially reached George's cabin. George had long since stopped struggling to escape, settling on the floor, his hands folded over his eyes. Blocking out the gentle light, he thought about where he'd gone wrong. What could he have done to make the god so angry? He couldn't think of a single genuine reason.

A terrible realisation had hit him the moment the doors locked. It was a real possibility that DreamXD planned to keep this up for forever. All the things that kept him from never leaving his house simply didn't apply to the god. He didn't have other friends to go out and speak to, he had George. Did gods need food or water? Probably also a no. He also didn't need sunlight, George was pretty sure. The obsidian covering every window and door of the house had only solidified this.

The thought alone weighed the brunette down exponentially, and he desperately willed it to the back of his mind.

Seeing that George's breathing had slowed, DreamXD drummed his fingers on the nightstand, waiting for him to look up. The mortal did not comply. That was okay, though. DreamXD knew a simple solution. He hadn't tried this much yet, but he was sure of its effectiveness.

He recalled hearing Dream for the first time in one of George's memories. He'd used it the voice the very next day, to gain the shorter's attention. It had worked beautifully, stopping George in his tracks. Dream had to have been important to George for him to react like that, and the god had no issue using this to his gain.

DreamXD smiled, carefully choosing his next words. He settled on something simple.

“George?”



It worked immediately, just as he'd wanted. The brunette's head rolled to face the god, giving him a look that could only be described as loathing.

"Stop," he said.

"Stop what?" DreamXD tried to keep his voice gentle, as authentic to George's friend as possible.

"That voice," George's volume was rising, "It's not yours."

"What are you talking about? I'm using it right now."

George sighed, and looked away.

"Oh, come on. Don't do that, George."

Stubborn silence glared back at him.

"C'mon, George," the god feigned. "We can sleep together, just like before. Don't you want that?"

The shock was tangible. George froze, almost stopped breathing, and then coughed out his breath. He turned towards the source of the painful memory, and felt his heart tear a little. Dream- no, DreamXD. He couldn't let himself be fooled. But *fuck*, it looked just like him. Those were Dream's eyes staring back at him, that was Dream's hand beckoning him forward, it was Dream's mask thrown to the side. Everything was exactly as he'd remembered it.

How had he known? George had never told DreamXD anything about Dream, there was no way in hell he had told him about that. He had to have though, right? Who else would have?

'Dream' waved his hand again, and George shrank back.

"No. No, you're not him," he whispered.



His friend's face smiled softly back at him, as bright and happy as ever. George could feel his pupils dilate just seeing it.

"Maybe not. But we can pretend, can't we?"

It hurt so much, because George genuinely wanted to. He hadn't spoken to Dream in so long. He could see himself climbing up next to him, finally able to fall asleep in his comfortable company again. It was all he wanted, actually. All thought of escape had been pushed aside.

His feet seemed to move on their own, pushing him up off the ground, walking him over to the bed, and stopping next to Dream. DreamXD. Whatever, he couldn't bring himself to care. The other was smiling up at him, and it made him feel impossibly lighter. He dropped down onto the bed next to his friend, and tried to get comfortable. A sleeved arm draped itself over his torso, and he sighed at the familiar position.

"There you go," Dream's voice sighed. "I've missed this."

Without a second thought, George was whispering back.

"Me too."

They stayed like that for a while, just barely hanging on the edge of okay. The golden light lit the room beautifully, everything was so calm. George had almost let himself believe it. But as they sat there in bloodstained clothes, fake contentment surrounding them, reality faded back in, and George let a quiet sob slip. He pressed his hand over his lips to muffle the noise, but it was too late, the other had already noticed.

"George? What's wrong?"

Receiving no response, the blonde turned to face his sleeping partner, looping his arm tighter around the boy as his weight shifted. Bringing his hand up, he gently brushed the hair out of George's eyes. The skin under them was damp and reddened.

"Dream would want me to fight you, you know," came a small whisper.



“You shouldn’t.”

George sighed out a shaky laugh. “Yeah, I know.” He looked down to his hands, lost in thought. “There’s no other way though, is there?” He looked back up.

DreamXD was on the floor in a second. George was sat on top of the god, leaning down to hold his arms while he looked for a tool to mine out of the house. DreamXD lets him, staring up at the ceiling, bored already.

“George...”

“Where is it!?” the human near-shouts. “I know you have something, you always have something.”

“George, stop!” The echoed voice was back, and when George looked back up, his “friend” was gone.

Even knowing it was all fake, he could weep at the loss.

“You’re not gonna find any-” George slammed a fist down onto his chest, something he hadn’t expected.

He snatched the pale wrist connected to said fist, holding it still.

“Friends don’t hit each other, George.”

“You’re not my fucking friend!” He yanked his arm back, trying to escape the god’s death-grip.

“Let go of me! Let me out!” George scraped his nails down the arm that held his wrist, angry tears blurring his vision.

An irritated grin split over DreamXD’s face, and he shut his eyes. “Okay! If that’s what you *really* want, George.”



The world flickered to black, and George jolted backwards.

George slammed back into reality like lightning from a stormcloud, all his senses shocked back to life in the span of a millisecond. His ears rang at the sound of his own breathing, and he could swear his vision was sharper, though he'd not yet opened his eyes. When had he closed them? Where was he? Everything felt much more solid. He struggled to get himself to move, and found the material under him to be soft, distributing his weight comfortably. He just barely opened his eyes and was immediately overstimulated, forcing them shut again. He gasped at the feeling. Every flinch, every miniscule change in his facial expression, it all felt so much more *real* now.

George groaned, he couldn't help it, and his throat felt sore at the noise. He was lying on his side, his arms pulled behind him, and he could feel something smooth around his neck. In an attempt to pull his hands in front of him he became aware that he was restrained. Panicked, he kicked his legs. This didn't do much, as he found they were also bound. His head ached, and he was suddenly very aware of how thirsty he was.

In the brief moments he was able to just barely keep his eyes open, he could see that the room he was in was quite dimly lit, and there seemed to be several figures pacing around. His hair was getting in his face, he realized. He knew it hadn't been this long moments ago. Everything was so...wrong.

He stayed there for what felt like forever, working to gather his thoughts, not hearing the god wake up and move to stand over him. DreamXD stares, taking in the sight of George being completely awake for the first time in months. He notices the boy shivering, and takes a mental note of George's breathing pattern.

It's like watching spring happen, the way George trembles to life, blood rushing back into his unused limbs, the way his throat moves as he swallows. Even though he's so far from where he was before this whole ordeal, he looks stronger.

Stepping closer, DreamXD witnesses George become aware of his presence, and try to feign sleep. For a split-second, he can tell George is considering opening his eyes, and then it's over, and his decision is made. George is looking at him, sunspots dancing in his eyes at the dim brightness, blocking out what he might be seeing momentarily.

It doesn't matter though, he'd recognize the silhouette anywhere.



It's suddenly all so bright in his mind, the memory flashing like a firework. It screams over everything else, and George can't look away, it's replaying on a projector in his mind. Going out to gather resources, seeing DreamXD, not worrying too much. This was someone he'd known for a while, albeit not long. DreamXD, that person who'd promised to be his friend. The taller had been a bit odd, he'd thought, but George was lacking in company these days, and beggars couldn't be choosers. Besides, DreamXD had seemed to genuinely care about George.

Maybe a bit too much though, George had thought to himself. He'd noticed the weird behaviour, why didn't he do something? He should've known better, shouldn't have gone off alone, shouldn't have ever trusted- it was already too late. George remembered cold nails digging into his skin, the way he'd scraped at the stone-like hands wrapped around his neck. Rough fabric being tied around his wrists, being dragged down underwater into a dark air pocket in the stones at the bottom. Gasping for breath, completely sure he'd gone some shade of purple. Being thrown into the air. Falling. When had he landed? Had he been falling up until this point? George blinks, and the memory is gone.

The god watches sharp realization cut over George's features, the way he immediately flinches back, and he knows that George *knows* .

He takes a second, considering what he might say. He decides on something simple, to test the waters.

"Hello, George."

The human didn't spend a second planning his response, immediately working to force the question out of his dry throat.

"Why," he paused, gritting his teeth in discomfort, "did y-"

But he stops, because DreamXD is reaching out to touch him, and George doesn't want that. He tenses, but then a hand is on his side and no, he can't take that right now, not when he knows what's going on, not when he knows nobody is around to save him, not when-. No.

He leans back and lets himself fall onto his back. The pain is instant, and George arches off the bed to escape it, only disturbing the torn muscles more. He sucks in a long, deep gasp, and the way he's positioned makes it look like he's being exorcised. He falls back against the bed limply, tears stinging at his eyes as his muscles cramp and twitch.



Someone rolls him back onto his side, and he can faintly register their too-calm words. He catches little pieces of them, like “still developing” and “you’re welcome”. He refuses to think about who’s voice it is he hears until he can breathe again, glancing up at DreamXD, absolutely terrified.

He chokes out the only question he can think of.

“What are you?”

Well, DreamXD has an easy answer for that. He grins.

“Your friend, George. Forever, remember?”

## Chapter End Notes

wooo. long week, long chapter. as always, please be sure to leave a kudos if you enjoyed, it really helps me out :]]] i’d really like to learn how to pace my stories better, so if anyone has any advice...hand it over. please. also, might not update next week. i am planning to write a bunch of short chapters and release them daily to show the passing of time in this story, because i think that would be cool. soooo. we will seeee. anyways. take care homies <3



## VI

### Chapter Summary

day one.

### Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

The first day, George could hardly breathe. It was as if he was stuck in a never-ending panic attack, waves of pain burning through him every time he moved. He recalled the events leading up to his capture in brief flashes, but they began to come less frequently as he became more aware of his situation.

Looking around, George found the bed he was on to be intricately decorated, little swirls and dashes carved into the dark wood of the frame. The lights illuminating wherever he was were dim and yellow. Not the bright, vibrant yellow of the morning sun, but a pale, dreary color that dampened everything it touched. There were endermen scattered around, walking freely and mumbling to themselves. George almost considers calling out to them, but his throat was so sore that it hurt to swallow.

His back was still aching, and it felt like something foreign had been shoved into him. He knew it was probably visible, that if he had a mirror of some sorts he might just be able to see the outline of whatever had been inserted just under his skin.

George wasn't quite coherent enough to understand the gentle words DreamXD whispered to him, and he was halfway grateful for it. The deity hadn't tried to touch him since he first woke up, and George could only hope that it would stay that way. The more time he had to himself, the more time to plan an escape.

-

By midday, the pain became dreadful. George felt weighed down and tense, and his eyelids were heavy from exhaustion. What would happen if he fell asleep, he wondered? It might give his body enough time to heal so that he could wake up functioning again...or. He wasn't sure how DreamXD would react to it.

A sudden cramp squeezed at his back muscles, and George winced.



Biting his lip to distract from the other pain, he weighed his options. Give in to sleep and face possible consequences, or trudge through endless exhaustion to avoid DreamXD.

He let his eyes drop closed, a black curtain covering his vision. Little sparks of light danced behind his eyelids like fireworks, and he wondered how long it'd been since he'd last eaten.

He was now aware how empty his stomach felt, and he could almost cry at the pain. He wouldn't though, not with a brutal, pitiless, emotionally stunted god nearby. Sleep pushed his head underwater, and he let himself drown.

-

A minute later he was back in his blocked off room. It was quiet, and he suddenly put all the pieces together. The past few months must've been a dream. Months? Surely not months. Time must be different in his mind, he couldn't accept that he'd really been lost for *months*.

He sat down on his bed. Looking down at his hands, he furrowed his eyebrows. Now that he looked closer, he couldn't seem to find his own fingerprints. What had they looked like again? Without another thought, he swiftly brought them together, a sharp clap resounding through the air.

It stung a bit. He didn't understand why. Placebo, maybe.

"Back so soon? After you practically *begged* me to let you out of here?"

Fuck.

George's fingers curled back into the bedsheets, but he refused to turn around.

"What does it feel like," the bed dipped next to him, "to bleed?"

George didn't know how to answer. He ignored the feeling of DreamXD's eyes on him.



“Is it...unbearable?”

He’s using Dream’s voice again.

George can’t help the slight relief he feels at the sound.

“George?”

He doesn’t look up. He puts all his effort into giving no reaction. Ignore. Ignore, just ignore.

“You don’t have to do that, you know,” DreamXD sighs, his tone knowing. “I can tell it helps you, George.”

The human choked on an inhale, coughing slightly.

“Hearing his voice, I mean,” the god clarified.

*What?*

“We’re quite literally in your mind right now. I know everything you know.”

*How-*

“You might as well be speaking, you know.”

“Stop! What the *fuck* , stop it right now-” George brought his hands up to cover his head, as if trying to muffle his own thoughts.

“You didn’t answer my question.” It’s less of a statement, more of a demand.



George couldn't care less. "Get out of my head-"

A hand grabs his arm, and before he can finish his arm is being sliced clean open, DreamXD's dark nail shining from the blood. George shrieks, tugging his arm back towards his chest.

"What's that feel like?" Dream's voice has never sounded so emotionless.

George can't answer, his arm feels far more real than he knows it is. *Definitely not just placebo*, he thinks to himself. *No way*.

But DreamXD reaches down to motivate the boy some more, which jogs George's thinking process.

"W- It hurts, it hurts!" He gasps out the words like a fish out of water. "It feels real, please stop, please-"

His face is pulled into the god's robes, and bloodstained claws rake through his hair.

"Interesting."

George pulls back, and the dark surrounding them is suffocating. Another piece clicks into place in George's mind.

"It was you..."

DreamXD looked down at him. "Changing your dreams? Yeah, that was me."

"The nightmare-"

"You woke up while I was helping you."



George looked up, and DreamXD's hands slid up his back, stopping where the pain began. George froze.

"So this hurts more, or less?" The god seemed genuinely curious.

"Uh- I..." George doesn't know whether to be honest or not, he doesn't want this information being used against him.

A silence passes over the two, full of cautious hesitation and dense tension. The human decides right then and there to not let himself sleep any more. DreamXD has too much control in George's mind, it'd be so easy to convince himself that this was all a nightmare, and he couldn't give up like that.

Fighting to keep his voice still, George manages to whisper out a question.

"What did you do to me?"

"You mean to your back?"

"Yeah?"

His hands shake at the quiet that follows.

Finally, DreamXD lets out a low hum, and sinks his nails into the pale skin of George's back.

The screams could break glass.



hey, hope you enjoyed. should be daily uploads this week :) hope everyone is doing well <3 (edit: btw that last bit is dreamxd's attempt at waking george up, he didn't just do that to be cruel)



## VII

### Chapter Summary

day two.

### Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

By day two, George has learned not to fall asleep.

He tries to keep his eyes open, and doesn't flinch when DreamXD sits on the floor next to his bed. He doesn't try to ask the god any more questions, and his thoughts come somewhat clearer.

George is wary of DreamXD's omniscience, but he knows he has to think in order to even have a fighting chance. He starts planning an escape, taking inventory of all the materials he has at hand. He could probably use these bedsheets to climb down something, if they were high up somewhere. He's still yet to figure out where he is.

All the while, his back is thrumming with pain. He still doesn't know what's been done to make it hurt this way, but he can assume DreamXD is the cause. His stomach is also aching, and the way his hair has fallen into his eyes is beginning to become overstimulating. The little pinpricks of hair on his eyelids might as well be actual needles.

Time is starting to lose it's meaning, and it's weighing on him. He knows that it's been at least a day since he woke up, but the question of how long he's been here still remains. He hopes to whatever god is out there that he hasn't been gone longer than a month.

-

Every once in a while, an enderman would get relatively close to him, mumble something he couldn't understand, and teleport away. He'd tried to make signals to somehow communicate with them, he even tried eye contact, but not one dared get much closer than a couple metres.

He wondered what DreamXD had had to do to them to make them so scared.



Painful hours went by, and George thought of Dream. Dream would probably be out of this situation by now. He'd have defeated DreamXD or snuck away, and George tried to think of how he'd do it. Nothing came to him, and he came to the conclusion that Dream wouldn't have let this happen to himself in the first place.

It was past noon when DreamXD stood up and left. George sighed in relief, his muscles subconsciously relaxing. He closed his eyes, and let himself savor the peace.

The blankets were soft underneath him, and the bed supported him well. If not for his situation, he could call this position comfortable.

A hand landed on his back.

George jumped, abruptly pulled from his thoughts. DreamXD curled his arm around the boy, hooking under him and pulling him up off the bed. The mortal went limp in his arms, and didn't try to move when he was placed in DreamXD's lap.

DreamXD held him with an arm around his torso, the brunette's back to his chest.

"I've got you food."

George ignored the ache in his back, which he noticed felt a lot heavier than it had last time he'd sat up. "How long has it been?"

"Since you ate?"

*Since you kidnapped me .* "Yes."

"Months."

Oh.

George looked down. "How is that-" he took a breath, "W- Well I can't have much," he sighs,



exasperated.

“Why not?”

George takes a breath. “My stomach can’t handle it, too much would hurt me.”

DreamXD looks like he’s thinking, turning the words over in his mind. “Well...okay. We can take it slow, if that’s what you need.”

George tries to relax, then. His breathing slows, and he tries to untangle the knots in his chest. He knows he has to eat to heal. He needs to do this, he needs to be stronger.

A warm piece of bread is held up to his mouth, and he opens to take it. He considers reaching up to feed himself, but doesn’t want to move his shoulders for fear of the pain. DreamXD gives it to him without hesitation, and watches thoughtfully as the brunette chews on the food.

George could almost cry at the taste. It’s nothing extraordinary, but it feels like the cure for everything ailing him, and he shuts his eyes, relishing the comfort.

It takes him a while to swallow, but once he’s done it, a glass of water is at his lips, waiting for a sign that he’s ready to drink. George tips his head forward ever so slightly, and is immediately met with the glass being pushed back, tilting water into his mouth.

The cool water soothes his throat, and George leans back into the deity’s chest. The knots in his back adjust slightly, but the pain is manageable. There’s a barely-there aftertaste, but he pays it no mind.

“Want more?”

George hums, opening his mouth slightly while DreamXD picks up another piece of bread.

They continue that way for a while, eventually finishing a fourth of the loaf. George sighs at the fullness, and for a while he’s worried it might’ve been too much.



He grimaces as DreamXD's hand rests on his shoulder, and turns to see what's happening. The god leaves golden marks on George's skin where he's touched him, and traces the brunette's collarbone.

He looks to the glass of water. It's light blue.

*Is there something in there?*

"Don't worry," DreamXD assures, "it's just for the wings."

George feels like he's short-circuited. "Wings..?"

DreamXD smiles. "There, you're finally hearing me."

"Wh...What?"

"They should be out by now, though," DreamXD sighs, ignoring him. "This'll help speed it up, hopefully."

"Drea-"

He stops. Numbness is washing over his skin like a cold shower, the uncomfortable thrum of nothingness surrounding his upper body. He can already feel it drenching his legs, and his heart stutters at the feeling.

Something stings in his neck.

His hand is immediately on it, or where it would be if DreamXD had not already pulled it back. A small drop of blood has pooled at the entrance point, and George can only assume he's been drugged with something as his legs completely lose sensation.



DreamXD senses this, and fills him in. “It’s just to help with the pain, nothing more.”

George is panicked and skeptical, his heart beating faster at the thought of what DreamXD could have given him. He grabs at the arm around his torso, numb fingertips digging in a bit too hard. A golden hand covers his own.

“George. I promise.”

George doesn’t answer, and instead focuses on what he can still sense. He takes note of the way their space smells, the colors he can see, the lingering taste of the bread from earlier. He clicks his tongue to hear something.

“I’ll stay with you,” DreamXD tries to reassure. George tries to ignore him.

It’s all okay, he’s going to get through it. He repeats it until he believes it, his breath evening out as DreamXD adjusts their position to make him more comfortable.

He doesn’t sleep, he just drags himself through the night.

## Chapter End Notes

wooo daily uploads woo woo. hope you are all doing well. george is about to go through hell, ngl, so there will be trigger warnings before the next chapter. also i'm completely fine with people sharing my work around, i take it as a compliment, but please don't copy it. with that said, thank you for reading, and i will see you tomorrow :DD



## VIII

### Chapter Summary

day three.

trigger warning for graphic violence and abuse in this chapter.

### Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

The third day creeps in slowly, and it almost feels as if George might get to rest. He's still completely numbed, but DreamXD has left him alone with his thoughts. George tests his restraints while he can without pain, and finds the ones around his arms and legs to be somewhat loose. The metal around his neck, however, proves to be quite tough. It weighs him down, it's completely solid.

Knowing there's not much he can do, George lets himself relax. His breaths come in a slow, repetitive pattern. He keeps his eyes closed, as he keeps getting hair in them. It's become quite long, he's noticed. He could probably brush it behind his ear at this point.

He plans an escape while DreamXD is absent, and not around to read his thoughts. Not being able to feel anything can really boost a person's mind, apparently. George is able to have perfectly coherent thoughts for the first time since he's woken up, and he's not complaining. He could almost smile to himself.

He saves it for when he escapes, mind wandering back to his plans. He knows he won't be able to break out of his restraints, but he may be able to talk DreamXD into removing them, he thinks.

DreamXD doesn't seem to understand humans at all, and George was planning on using that. The god surely wouldn't let him die, George thought.

The biggest problem was actually the fact that George had no idea where he was. He'd never seen this place before, all he knew was that he'd nearly drowned getting here.

Looking up, he made eye contact with an enderman. The lanky thing looked sad. It stared back at George with an expression that told the boy he definitely wasn't wanted here.



*I'd leave if I could* , he thinks at the mob, hoping that somehow his message gets through.

The enderman blinks, nods, and teleports away.

George doesn't know if he actually understood, but the gesture instills in him a bit of hope.

-

DreamXD doesn't show up until midday. He doesn't sit with George, or communicate with him in any way, but George can feel the god's eyes on him, watching him intently.

He tries to stop thinking about escape, settling his vision on an uninteresting fold in the fabric of his bedsheets, letting the thought of it overtake his mind.

He doesn't even realize the hand on his back until a shadow drapes over him.

Craning his neck to see his captor, he notices something dark in the bed beside him. Based on the stem-like shape, he could guess it was a handle, probably made from obsidian. His eyes follow the dark material upwards, and there it is, something reflective, something *sharp* .

The knife's not typical, it looks like the handle is too long, and the blade is too small. It wouldn't work well for stabbing. Cutting, maybe. But not terribly deep, it's not wide enough.

He glances back up to DreamXD, who's watched him make direct eye contact with the tool, and waits for an answer to his question.

"If we leave them in any longer, I think they'll grow around your other bones."

*What?*

George furrows his eyebrow, and DreamXD pulls his hand off his back, eyeing it with concern.



He thinks back to the pain there, the feeling of something growing under his skin.

*Oh.*

*Oh, no.*

He's about to pull at his restraints when DreamXD grips his shoulder, reaching down to get the knife.

"No, no! Don't, please, I'll bleed to death-" DreamXD is sitting him up in foreboding silence.

"I'll die! I'll die, you'll kill me-" A hand covers his mouth, and his lips are gold.

"Shh. I've got healing potions," DreamXD hushed.

George keeps yelling, though his words are muffled and shaky. He doesn't trust DreamXD in the slightest, and he can barely hear the god's words of reassurance over the sound of his own heart pounding in his ears.

He can't feel them, but he knows his hands are shaking. When he opens his eyes, everything is a bit more blurry, and he thinks that he might be crying, or at least close to it. It feels like there's a weight in his stomach, and all he wants to do is make it stop. He can hear the chains keeping him down clink against each other, and he wonders if the numbing will last long enough to let him die without pain.

A few words get past the screaming of his heartbeat. "Stop moving, George."

George knows he's talking about the shaking. He can't stop though, it's involuntary. He tries his best to still himself, nonetheless.

DreamXD's hand leaves his mouth, and he takes the opportunity to take some deep breaths. *Has he already started cutting?* George squeezes his eyes shut.



“I haven’t.”

The echoey voice sounds almost sympathetic.

George hears movement, and calm hands are suddenly on his shoulders. He turns to look behind him slowly, and DreamXD makes no move to stop him.

When he peers over his shoulder, DreamXD is quiet. Everything is very still, and it looks as if the god is listening for something. He has his ear right against George’s back, like a child listening to their parents argue through a thin wooden door.

His heartbeat. DreamXD is listening to his heartbeat. He can practically feel it speed up at the realization.

With that, the god pulls back, letting his hands slide down from George’s shoulders.

Dream’s voice breaks through the silence. “We’ll wait until you’re ready, but we don’t have too long. Okay George?”

George doesn’t register much of it, but nods anyway at the mention of putting it off.

DreamXD hums.

They sit there quietly for a while. Long enough for George to stop shaking, for his breathing to even out more or less, for his heartbeat to sound less like a rattle and more of a drum. He almost feels safe, and wonders if DreamXD might let it go, if he can maybe escape before the god does whatever he has planned.

Light flickers in the corner of his eye, and a hand is back on his shoulder. He jerks forward before the blade can touch him, and he hears DreamXD sigh.

George squeezes his eyes shut, and doesn’t notice until his head is being tipped back that



something is at his lips. A bland dust-like taste fills his mouth, and he swallows reflexively.

“This is what’s best for you, I promise.”

It doesn’t help that it’s Dream’s voice saying it.

He shakes his head at the words, and he knows he’s crying at this point. He tries to stay controlled, though the urge to scream and fight is overwhelming. He didn’t *ask* for this. He never wanted *this* . It hurts on a level deeper than physical, and the added fear is tearing him apart.

DreamXD puts a hand on his shoulder for what feels like the hundredth time, and when George tries to shake him off, his muscles don’t respond. He can hear the deity’s robes shift as he moves to place the blade against his skin, and when he tries to object with words, he finds himself unable to move his jaw to speak.

He resorts to trying to communicate through his thoughts.

*Please don’t kill me.*

“I won’t.”

As they sit there, waiting for the medicine to take full effect, George can do nothing but hope those words are true.

## Chapter End Notes

heya :]] hope everyone's having a good day. (side note : idk if you know this, but you can subscribe to ao3 authors and receive notifs when they update stories...so...ahahaha \*winks at u)



## IX

### Chapter Summary

day four.

cw : gore and manipulation

### Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

He doesn't cut into George until day four, though neither of them would know it's a new morning.

Time is the last thing on George's mind. The first thing on his mind, however, is the way his eyes have slipped open, giving him a blurred view of the bedsheets below him, obscured slightly by his eyelashes.

The second thing on his mind is staying conscious. George's entire body feels heavy, and he knows he couldn't move if he tried. Sleep weighs him down, but he won't let himself go. He knows that if he does, he'll die. There's no control in sleep.

No words are spoken, but George knows DreamXD is waiting to be sure he'll stay down. On some level, George feels like he might not be awake. Because surely he isn't dying here, not now. He hasn't gotten to say goodbye to Dream, the real Dream. He never went on that camping trip with Sapnap, or stayed late with Niki to try his hand at baking. There's so much he hasn't done, and..

And the sheets have gone red.

It blooms over them like a flower petal opening, and George wants to scream. All he can get out is a small groan.

"You're still awake?"

DreamXD moves to see George's face, and frowns at the sight.



George is afraid. It's all he knows right now. This constant fear, it must be hell. Or worse.

*Stop looking at me.* He'd yell it if he could.

"Okay, okay," DreamXD leans back, refocusing on George's open skin again.

There's a long, clean line sliced vertically down his back.

"Can you feel that?"

George tries to shake his head, but nothing happens.

DreamXD gets the message, sliding his fingers under the skin. Warm blood runs over his hands and down his arms, but he pays it no mind.

Feeling around, he finds what he's looking for, and pulls it forward. George jerks, an involuntary reflex, which only helps the limb pop free quicker. It's partially connected to George's spine, but it comes off easily.

He notices George's thoughts have become less coherent, and he swears he can hear the boy's heartbeat practically vibrating.

"It's okay, you're okay," DreamXD says, reaching for a healing potion. "You're okay, George."

He holds the wing out when he pours the potion, so the skin knits around it at the base, leaving behind only a light scar. It's relatively light, as the bones inside it are mostly hollow. It looks like an upside down arm, George has yet to grow feathers. The skin covering the new limb is thin and translucent, and DreamXD marvels at his own work. Sure, it's quite delicate at the moment, but these definitely have potential.

DreamXD tries to calm the human as much as possible, transitioning from his own echoed voice to Dream's.



“You’re halfway there, George.”

George’s heart slows ever so slightly, his mind going a bit quieter.

DreamXD continues.

“Everything is okay,” he cuts another line down the mortal’s back, “it’s all under control.”

A new stream of blood soaks the bed sheets, but DreamXD pays it no mind.

“You still with me, George?” He grips onto the second wing, red coating his hands.

*Yes.*

DreamXD smiles, and he hopes it shows in his voice. “Good, that’s good.”

A tear drops down George’s face, and the red blurs.

*Please, I-*

“Almost done.” He pulls the limb free, reaching down for a second potion.

George listens to the liquid drain from the bottle, splashing against his open skin.

DreamXD carefully runs a damp towel over the newly exposed skin of the wings, cleaning them off.

They’re identical, both intricately put together. They’re a masterpiece, and DreamXD smiles.



“They’re perfect, George.”

George is too emotionally exhausted to think of a reply.

“I’m going to lay you down now, I’ll clean this up in a bit.”

George doesn’t make a move to respond.

“Okay?”

Nothing.

“George?”

He lightly taps the side of the human’s head.

*Okay .*

-

George is face down in the bed for the rest of the day. DreamXD is careful to not disturb him, even replacing his binds with less rough material.

He knows that George will be in pain when the numbing wears off, even with the healing potions. He did lose a lot of blood, after all. DreamXD hadn’t expected to leave scars on the human’s skin, but had to give himself credit on how precise and careful the lines were.

While he waits for George to be more conscious, he bakes bread. He thinks back to the way George had reacted to eating. Taste wasn’t something he was familiar with, but now he was curious. He made a mental note to remind himself to ask George about it later. In the meantime, he’ll try to make the best bread he can.



-

George, on the other hand, is mainly focusing on keeping himself awake. He fills his mind with lively images of movement and noise, holds his breath, even makes himself relive painful memories, just trying to stay conscious.

His eyes have begun to ache, ever so slightly. He worries about the pain behind the numbness, but also welcomes it, knowing it'll help him keep awake.

In the background of his mind, he's trying to process what's just happened. He won't let that come to the forefront, though. He won't think about how he could very well have just bled to death without saying goodbye to his friends. He won't think about the permanent changes to his body that have been made. He definitely won't think about how he'll never wear his favorite shirt again, or how he'll never receive another surprise hug from behind on a warm sunny morning.

George's heart aches.

He promises himself to not look back. He won't look at them. He won't.

## Chapter End Notes

heya, sorry for the delay, i got distracted. hope you're all doing well, or at least better than george. haha... welp! gonna say this again bc it worked last time but did ya'll know you can subscribe to ao3 authors and get notifs for when they update :0000 well you can..soooo...;)



# X

## Chapter Summary

day five. (1/2)

cw for implied violence

## Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

He repeats it into the fifth day. The pain has become more intense, and George is fighting exhaustion by tensing his back muscles.

DreamXD changed the bed sheets a while ago, but George can still smell his own blood. It makes him sick to think about, so he tries to breathe through his mouth. His lips are dry and beginning to chap when DreamXD moves to stand in front of him again.

He kneels down, making eye contact with the brunette, checking to see if he's conscious.

“Hello.”

George tries to speak, but still can't manage it, immediately beginning to cough.

“Woah, hey. You're still awake...”

*What do you want?*

DreamXD smiles, holding up a pair of scissors. George flinches, eyes widening.

“Oh,” realizing his mistake, the god stops immediately. He raises a hand, as if trying to wave the idea away. “No, no. I was gonna cut your hair.”



George doesn't move.

"That doesn't hurt, does it?"

*No, it shouldn't.*

DreamXD nods, but doesn't move any closer. His expression changes to something more confused, slightly upset.

"Why are you *mad* at me?"

George cringes at the question. A hundred reasons flash through his mind, but he tries not to linger on them. He needs DreamXD to think he's earned his trust. Despite all the horrible shit he's going through, he has to stick to the plan.

*I'm not mad, he starts. I'm just hurting.*

The god tilts his head, not quite believing him. He decides not to push it. "Okay."

DreamXD sits at the edge of his bed, lifting George's head to lie in his lap. He brushes the brown strands away from the boy's eyes, and takes a second to study his face.

George is so interesting, and nothing like him. The human is a collection of miniscule details, tiny pinpricks of colors make up the texture of his skin, shards of caramel streak through his irises, tiny black lines hang from his eyes, collecting the crystal tears that fell from them. He never stops moving. Even while he sleeps, George is constantly in motion. His chest rises and falls, his face contracts and fades from color to color, his hands twitch ever so slightly. He was so...alive. And now, seeing him actually awake, completely aware, DreamXD could stare at George for hours.

Trapping some of the soft hair in between his fingers, DreamXD remembered the question he'd been meaning to ask George.

"What is taste like?"



George looks up at him, confusion clear on his face.

*You mean like...flavour?*

“Yes,” DreamXD said. He paused to wait for an answer.

George tries his best.

*I don't know. Maybe it's like sound.*

He waits for a response, but nothing comes, so he continues.

*Sometimes it's good, sometimes not. Some flavors feel different.*

“Oh. Hm.”

He'd get George to taste other things for him later, he decided. He poised the scissors back at his hair.

*Wait, you're not gonna cut it like that, are you?*

George slapped a mental hand over his thoughts.

*Sorry, go ahead-*

“How should I do it?”

George thinks back to when he was a kid sitting in Sapnap's living room. Dream sat across from him, smiling at the way George flinched when Bad brushed the hair off his shoulders. Sapnap's



father had been the only one who really knew how to cut hair on the server, and George had never had a problem with the way he did it.

He shook off the memory, but left DreamXD with a good idea of what he'd need to do.

Without a word, he set down the scissors, and lifted George off his lap.

“Can you sit up?”

*I can...*

DreamXD stands, turning to watch George peel himself from the sheets.

*It'd be easier without the chains, though.*

George holds his breath, waiting for a response.

“Yeah, of course.”

He lets out the breath he'd been holding.

-

The haircut is short and thoughtful. DreamXD tries so hard, but George imagines that it probably still looks botched compared to Bad's.

He couldn't care less though, because when DreamXD is done, he doesn't move to put the chains back on. He just leaves, happy with his work, and George watches him go, disappearing behind the yellow sand hills.

He lets himself smile.



The feeling of having nothing holding him down is so...Freeing. It's the most obvious, but the most accurate way to describe the way his breaths feel lighter, the elated feeling of moving without hearing chains clink against each other, how everything seems brighter now that he can move without trouble.

He glances around the room, and several of the endermen stare back. Their expressions are blank, but tentative, almost like they know what's going to happen.

When George stands up, none of them make a move to stop him.

When he takes a step forward, away from his bed, they almost seem scared.

He takes another. Some take a step back.

No issues there, then.

He spins, carefully examining his surroundings. DreamXD is nowhere to be seen, everything is quiet.

Carefully, quietly, he begins to walk in the direction DreamXD left. If anyone knew the way out, it would be the one who brought him here in the first place.

The sand is warm under his bare feet, and he struggles to keep his balance. The wings add extra weight to his back, and he has to lean forward more to accommodate it. He just barely stretches his arms away from himself, just in case he needs to catch his balance.

He reaches the edge where the ground begins to slope downward, and looks out at the sand beneath him.

There's nothing. There's no door, no cave, no light at the end of the tunnel. George's breath stutters. He drags his eyes over the sight again, and-



An enderman teleports right next to him, and he nearly jumps out his skin.

It mumbles something in that staticy voice of theirs, and George can't look away. He braces himself for the attack, but nothing comes.

When he opens his eyes, the lanky thing is looking right at him, arm raised, pointing to something in the distance. George thinks he's hallucinating, the lack of sleep finally overtaking him, but it shakes its arm more aggressively, almost with a sense of urgency.

George follows the path of sight pointed out to him, and, to his surprise, there's something. A dark spot, a little obsidian mound, almost resembling the trunk of a cut-down tree.

He looks back at the enderman, and he swears it's speaking to him. Not with words, but with looks.

*Run.*

It's not meant to be nice, he knows. It's for both their best interest that George gets out, DreamXD is a common enemy for them, but George could almost consider the gesture...friendly.

"Thank you." He chokes it out, and starts running.

## Chapter End Notes

hey hey hey it's me again. how is everyone doing? hopefully not too bad. anyways, just letting you all know that we're almost to the climax of the story, which means the daily uploads will stop for a week while i write and edit the next few chapters. that shouldn't be for at least two more chapters, but just wanted to let you guys know in advance!! i also want to say thank you for all the support, it's really inspiring and it means a lot to me. ahgh okay i'll quit blabbing now, thank you all for reading <3



# XI

## Chapter Summary

day five (2/2)  
i'm sorry in advance

## Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

It takes him a while to make it to the obsidian, but he gets there. His steps are uneven and he's breathing hard, but he's determined to get out.

Finding nothing but the lump of dark rock, he turns to look around. Nine other similar stones curve around him in a circle, and there's something resembling a pit in the center. Off to his far right there's light coming up from behind a hill, but he doesn't pay it any mind. He steps forward, approaching the center of the circle.

It's a small indent in the ground, large enough to fall through. He looks over the edge, and it looks to be filled with thousands of tiny stars, a miniature galaxy shrunk down into the area of a kiddie pool.

George knows he should give it more thought, but he doesn't. He steps forward, over the edge, and lets himself fall.

The world dissolves around him, and everything is dark.

-

*"George?"*

*Dream.*

*"Holy shit, George. Are you okay?"*



*Dream's here.*

*"Did you fall?"*

*George smiles.*

*"Should I go get Bad?"*

*George just barely opens his eyes, the bright sunlight streaming through the branches leaves sunspots in his vision. The broken branch he'd been sitting on lied across his stomach, and the pressure has him trying to catch his breath.*

*Wait .*

*A wave of deja vu rushes over him, and his heart sinks. Something's wrong, he can't quite place it, but something's wrong .*

*The sunspots are getting bigger, darkening his vision, the branch feels lighter, the sunlight is no longer warm on his skin.*

*He rolls on his side, turning to Dream.*

*He's fading, too.*

*"No- Please, please stay with me," he begs.*

*Dream opens his mouth to reply, but the words fall on deaf ears. In an instant, everything moves quicker, the last of the world is gone, and George is in the dark again.*

*The memory slips, and his mind is blank.*



-

George jerks awake, standing on the other side of the portal.

He's back in the overworld. He can tell immediately. The air is stuffy, but different. The room is lit by torch, and he can hear bats screech from outside the small closed-off room he's in.

The walls are brick, with dark olive moss growing in the crevices. He wonders how long it's been since someone's been down here.

Based on the torch, not long enough.

He needs to start running, now.

He rips the first door open with purpose, and sprints down the hallway. In the not-quite-coherent background of his mind, he knows he's not alone.

Bookshelves line the rooms he finds his way into, and every so often he gets scared by his own reflection in a mirror. His moves are aimless, and he wants to give up, completely lost, when a bat flies past him, a clump of fruit in its tiny claws.

He spins around immediately, already starting in the direction the animal came from. His footsteps echo on the dark grey walls, the sound almost lining up with the flickering of light that paints the world around him.

He comes to a stop in an intersecting hallway.

Three directions, excluding the one he came from. He hesitates to consider his options.

A voice breaks the silence.



“George?!”

DreamXD's noticed him.

More importantly though, his voice came from the left.

The decision now made obvious, and he turns to sprint right. He almost trips, his wings pushing him forward.

His heart is in his throat, but it feels good to actually be running again. The walls pass in a blur, his unevenly chopped hair itches his neck, but he can't be bothered.

The hallway comes to an end, and he's in an empty room. A crack in the wall leaks sunlight, just big enough for a small bat to fly through. The light shines into a pool in the middle of the floor, lighting up the blueish water, and George feels a shock of familiarity at the sight.

It's the way out, he knows it.

He could cry at his luck.

George knows that acting without thinking will get him in trouble soon, but he prays to whatever's out there that it won't today. He throws himself into the pool, and kicks off the edge, plunging himself downwards.

He swims like his life is on the line because, well, it is. The pressure increases as he goes deeper, and he feels lightheaded. His wings pull him down, and he considers cutting them off right then and there.

It's all okay though, because he can see light now. A gentle red shades the water above him, shining around him and illuminating the ocean floor. He sees his own shadow, kicking and grasping upwards towards the surface, and looks up to speed up the process.

His head breaks free from the water with little noise, but he's instantly choking on air, sucking breaths in quicker than he can count. The salty water hangs on his eyelashes and burns his eyes, but



he can make out the outline of the shore, the sun just barely hovering over the ground, waiting for him still.

In the next second, he's clambering to get out of the water, the wet material of his pants picking up sand and sticking to his thin frame. He collapses onto the beach, his wings sagging behind him. It's a bit cold, and the water rises and licks at his shivering body.

He coughs, and blood rises into his mouth. He spits it out on the sand.

With a broken voice and a raw throat, he yells.

He tries to get out the word 'help' but it just won't come, always fading off after the initial 'heh' sound. A shadow comes up beside him, and he turns to find that it's his dog.

George hadn't meant to tame the creature, but he couldn't deny that he was quite cute.

Right now though, he just wanted to alert someone of his location.

"Hey," he looks at the dog. "Go get Sappap."

The animal tilts its head at him, as if it could sense the stress in George's tone.

"Go, please."

The dog whimpers, reaching up a paw to George's heaving chest.

"Go!" He barked the word.

Flinching backwards, the dog looks up, something behind George catching his attention.

Cold fear strikes George in the abdomen, and he hears footsteps stop behind him.



“What the *fuck* do you think you’re doing here, George?”

Launching himself to his feet, George yells again. “Go, run!”

The dog sprints away, and George coughs as he’s pushed back down to the ground.

“I’m sorry-”

The words are kicked out of him. His back arches as his lungs spasm, trying to reinflate themselves. A small splatter of blood lands on the sand, staining the yellow-white dark red.

A solid grip envelops his ankle, and he’s aggressively tugged forward, back into the water. He tries to kick, but it’s all for not. His body is too weak, he can’t breathe, he can’t move. This is a nightmare.

“..you ungrateful....promised...now I have to..”

He can’t process the words being spoken, but he gets the gist. He fights the grip harder, and tries to scream, to get someone’s attention. He just had to stay above water long enough for Sapnap, just long enough, just for a little longer, *please* .

Every breath comes as a gasp, a choke, and a cough. It doesn’t stop when his head is pulled under, the salt water burning his lungs and nose. The pressure comes too quickly, and George swears his eyes have been crushed into his skull, he’s so close to dying, he just knows it.

He’s abruptly pulled from the water, back into the small room he’d been in before. His wings knock against the edge of the pool, and the pain leaves bright stars exploding behind George’s eyelids.

He opens them, just barely. Everything’s blurry, next to him is a bright yellow book, something about recipes written on the spine. He isn’t able to see much, as he not-so-gently dragged forward, his head knocking at every groove and crack in the floor, scraping the skin of his scalp. The grey walls seem to be getting darker, more blurry.



He tries to take a breath, but coughs instead, sea water coming up and out of his throat. His gag reflex kicks in, and he begins to vomit, all the water and bread coming up in violent bursts. Back arched, his wings drag against the bricks, tearing open the thin skin. DreamXD is talking again, apparently angry about this, and George can't even bring himself to move. He goes limp, accepting the pain like some emotionless, unfeeling doll.

Words seem to swim through his ears in faint echoes that he can't comprehend.

When they reach the portal, DreamXD grabs him by the hair, and he doesn't try to fight as his head is slammed into the floor. He lets go, and drops into sleep.

## Chapter End Notes

sad day for the george escape truthers. anyways. daily gang, we are two chapters from hopping back on the weekly wagon. this is sad, i know. but !! i have some beeduo hurt/comfort in store to get us through the week :) and maybe some sbi if i'm feeling up for it :] also, love how everyone just agreed that the enderman in the last chapter was ranboo lmao. as always, i hope you're all doing well, and thank you for reading.



## XII

### Chapter Summary

you guys asked me to give george a break.

### Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

For a while, nothing moves. The dark curtain over his eyes is all he's focused on, he could almost forget what brought him here, how he was forced down into his own thoughts by the rough contact of his skull on some cold grey stone.

Nothing is tangible, but he knows he's moving. Something about the way his hair feels on the back of his neck, or the way his stomach turns, or the way the air in his lungs presses to the front of his chest tells him he is, but he's not too worried about it.

Something stirs in him, but not in the emergent, sacred way that he's grown used to the last couple of days. It's more of a slight twitch, moving across his entire body, starting in his left hand. He brings said hand up to his face to see, and it's pale bruised skin is a stark contrast to the darkness surrounding him. It's smoother than he remembers, all the creases and lines formed from years of climbing and building missing. His nails look slightly thinner than they should be, and he wonders how long he'll have to take care of himself for them to go back to normal.

He feels calm in the dark, welcomes it almost. It's better than the constant fear he's grown accustomed to feeling on the outside. He could be happy here, he thinks. If this is death, maybe he doesn't need to wake back up.

Then again, if this is death, he won't. He almost chuckles at the idea.

"If some people were actually listening..."

He turns his head towards the source of the words, and his back presses against something hard. It's not painful though, in fact...he may call it familiar. Warm orange light fades into vision, and he sighs at its gentleness. He wants to look around, see more, but he can't turn his head.



Suddenly, he can make out a face staring at him, friendly annoyance sketched over its sharp features.

He raises his eyebrows, a question on his tongue.

“Yeah, looking at you George.” Sapnap.

The gentle aggressiveness of his tone is a blessing that George welcomes without hesitation.

As much as he wants to recount the events of his past couple days, to beg for some sort of help, his body moves on its own, raising his arms and scrunching his nose.

“Pfft, what? I am listening.”

That’s a lie, he has no idea what’s going on.

“You are so not.”

He only glances to his side for a second, barely acknowledging the comment, but he feels a little warmer at the words. It’s been so long since he’d heard that voice, that tone, the casual openness almost foreign to his ears.

Dream lightly elbows him in the side. “What was *that* look for?”

The words are lighthearted, and enough for George to give in to the moment, and forget about the real world outside his mind.

“Loo- I didn’t give you any “*look*”, shut up.” He turns to look Dream in the face now, and almost rolls his eyes at the stupid grin on the younger’s face.

“Whatever.”



George witnesses it happen like a passenger and, though he's got both his friend's attention, he's never felt more invisible. Watching Dream and Sapnap like this, unable to do anything, almost feels like a punishment, but one he would welcome without hesitation until the day he dies.

After much playful bickering, the three eventually make their way outside, and warm summer air pulls at George's hair, neatly cut and recently washed. His feet are sore from a former day's battle, but he doesn't hesitate to race Sapnap when provoked. Dream trails behind them playfully, occasionally speaking to narrate the chase with a laugh.

They fall back into their typical pattern so easily it hurts.

"Your shoe's untied, George-"

"I don't care!"

Sapnap repeats the words in a high-pitched, mocking tone, before slowly approaching a nearby stream.

Three pairs of footsteps stop next to the creek, and Dream jokingly pushes Sapnap forward, towards the quick running water.

"Woa- What the fuck man?!"

Dream laughs then, quickly walking backwards as Sapnap reaches forward to exact his revenge.

George stifles a giggle, bending down to tie his shoe. Despite what he'd claimed, he actually did care. He didn't want to end up like Dream, whose shoelaces had become so frayed recently that they'd become more of a fur than a string. Sapnap had threatened to burn the cursed things several times, but had yet to follow through. George wasn't putting it past him yet, though.

He finished looping the threads together, and looked back to his friends, locked in an aggressive-looking hug/attack a couple feet away. Sapnap's hand was dangerously close to Dream's hair, flames licking up his palm in an excited dance.



“I’ll burn you- Ow! Get in,” he paused, throwing all his energy into the taller, pushing him back towards the creek, “-the fucking water!”

The two fell backwards, chest to chest, Sapnap yelling triumphantly all the way down.

George covered his face from the splash, smiling behind his arms as a few cool drops landed on his skin.

Reliving memories is such tender agony, he realizes, watching the water fold and rush around his wrestling friends. Someone once told him that loving people was loving a thousand different versions of them, and he’s finally starting to understand that, he thinks.

The version of Sapnap he’s watching dunk Dream’s head underwater at the moment is gone, has *been* gone.

The version of Dream choking and coughing up water, all while keeping a smug smile on his face, is never coming back, either.

If he weren’t trapped behind his own past self’s eyes, he would be using them to cry.

Bittersweet has never felt so unkind of a word.

Still, an amused smile is split over his face, and he points out the obvious.

“Bad’s gonna kill you two.” He giggles at the thought.

They both look up to him, and Sapnap yells back, “Shut up George!”

Dream wiggles out from under the shorter, and pushes himself to his feet. Water cascades out of his clothes, and his face is red from holding his breath. He starts towards George, his shoes making godawful squawking noises at each step.

“On, no. No, Dream, don’t!” George is still laughing, tripping over his own feet as he tries to



retreat backwards.

“Yes Dream, do!” Sarnap encourages, pulling off his bandana, wringing out the soaked material.

George is about to turn away and start sprinting when his back makes contact with rough tree bark. He looks up, eyes wide. Nowhere to run, he presses closer to the tree, opening his mouth to protest.

“Dream, pl-”

Dream pounces on him in a second, the soaked boy wrapping hoodies arms around his torso in a malicious hug. Water drips from his hair, and he shakes his head to get the wet strands out of his eyes. George’s shirt is becoming more of a towel each second.

“Stop, stop! You’re cold!” George means it on some level, but he’s also laughing.

“Deserved,” Sarnaps comments, now standing next to them.

He thinks for a moment, and steps closer.

George knows what he’s planning in a second. “Sarnap- Don’t-”

The youngest joins the hug, and Dream turns so that they’re both making as much contact with George as possible.

When they pull away, George might as well have jumped in the creek with them. Dream puts a hand on his shoulder in support, still smiling.

“I hate you,” George sighs, holding his arms out to his sides, a futile effort to dry quicker.

Sarnap laughs, retying his bandana around his head.



George trunks to look at Dream, and they share a moment of brief eye contact, Dream's smile reaching his bright eyes, George trying his best to hold a scowl, or something resembling it.

George misses them, this version of them, *so* much.

He could stay here forever. He can't help but wish he does.

But, the second he thinks it, he starts to fade. Dream's smile becomes a bit less clear, Sapnap's flames the slightest bit dimmer. The sun isn't warm anymore, the water feels less heavy in his clothes. The creek is no longer rushing by, at least it doesn't sound like it.

The frown is still on his face, but it lacks the sincerity it would have if he could control his body at this moment. He doesn't feel panicked, as he has recently when he's pulled from sleep. No, this time feels different.

He has no fear, no fight, no anger left in him. He doesn't try to yell for help he knows isn't coming. The water soaking his skin is nothing but liquid dread, and it seems to get heavier as his closest friends fade from his mind's eye. He knows, even now, that this will be the last time he sees them.

He fades back into consciousness with sorrowful acceptance.

## Chapter End Notes

so!! tomorrow is the big one. i am actually kind of nervous about it. i hope everyone is doing well, thank you all so much for your continued support. after tomorrow's chapter, i'll take a week to write and edit the next chapters. again, thank you all so much for reading, i'll see you tomorrow <3



## XIII

### Chapter Summary

the last day

cw for violence and death

### Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

When George comes to, it's the sixth day. His eyes feel heavy in his head, and he's only able to open one of them completely, as the other is too badly bruised. Dry blood makes his hair stick out, and crusts over his mouth. He knows he's lost at least one tooth, all he tastes is iron and sugar.

It's a rude awakening, almost made harsher by the pleasant dream preceding it. He groans, and his chest aches with the sound.

"There you are."

He looks up, his dreary eyes darker than they've ever been.

"Took you long enough..."

There's a hand in his hair, and his head is pushed back down into something soft.

He hums in response, and lets his eyes sink shut again.

"Uh-uh, wake up George," DreamXD says, his grip on George's hair tightening.

George lets him pull, he's not terribly worried about whatever's about to happen. Death seems so much less terrible now that he thinks about it. Even if he makes it out of here, he knows the people he loves are gone. Dream and Sapnap are so different now, and though he's tried so hard to deny it, he thinks he's ready to accept the fact that the versions of them who love him and want him around are gone. George has nothing left to fight for, so he won't fight.



His head is yanked up, and his neck adjusts with a loud crack. For a second he thinks DreamXD's broken it, and flinches. But he's still breathing when two clawed fingers press over his eyelids, pulling them open, forcing him to look over his surroundings.

George doesn't recognize the room they're in. It's mostly blue aside from the bed he's lying in, and the torches lighting up the walls around him. He thinks he can see a window behind DreamXD, and from the looks of it, they seem to be quite high off the ground.

His eyes twitch, itching to blink, and DreamXD presses harder into his skin. The room goes blurry as his eyes dry, and tears begin to well up. He whines at the pain, but doesn't struggle, knowing that'll only make it worse.

DreamXD scoffs, pulling the hand holding his eyes open back, letting him blink. He grabs at George's arm.

"Come on, get up."

The human is still squinting, trying to get his vision back to normal, when he's dragged off the bed. His legs are unsteady underneath him, and he thinks his left might be broken, or at least fractured. He tries his best to stay upright nonetheless.

His wings make it difficult though, and he trips backwards, falling back on to the cushy mattress.

DreamXD lets out an impatient sigh, and watches him try to regain his balance. It's to no avail though, and so the god leans forward, hastily cupping a hand under George's chin. When the brunette barely reacts, pliant in his grip, he wraps his fingers around his thin neck, and yanks him forward.

Before George can fall backwards, DreamXD moves to stand behind him, not releasing the grip he has on his neck. He's careful to mind the other's wings. With slow, deliberate steps, he leads George to the window.

Now that he's closer, George finds that the glass stretches to the ground, and he suspects that it's really more of a glass door than a window.



“Open it.” The familiar gravelly static voice has returned.

George lifts a shaky arm, but his vision is too blurry to make out any sort of handle, so he tries pushing on the glass. It doesn't budge, so he slides his hand on it, and the door slides open. He breathes a sigh of relief.

DreamXD pushes him forward, and he nearly trips over the door frame as he steps outside onto the balcony. The air is thin, and he vaguely wonders how high up they are.

DreamXD releases his hold on him, and steps forward, turning back to watch George for a reaction.

“Look around George,” he instructs, gesturing out at the building they're looking out of. “Tell me what you see.”

George doesn't move, he stares straight forward, a dead look in his eyes.

DreamXD slaps him, and his wings jump behind him in surprise. The pain is sharp and serves to prompt him into doing what he's asked.

He glances around, moving his head as much as possible to prove he's doing so. His suspicions are confirmed, they are quite high up. There's several other balconies below him, each extremely decorated in separate ways. Tall, stain-glass windows streak up the side of the building, depicting scenes of someone in the nether, the overworld, and...shit. The person is him. The third depicts him asleep on that godawful bed, and he cringes at the sight.

Following the scenic visual upwards, he finds that at the very top, right where the roof begins, the images combine. There, in the space above all three versions of him, is DreamXD.

*He's always been watching. Since the beginning.*

George feels goosebumps run down his arms, and is grateful he has nothing left in his stomach to throw up.



He continues looking, trying to avoid being hit any more.

Faint glowing can be seen from each window, and he presumes that each room is candle-lit. Looking past the foundation of the towering build, he sees DreamXD has taken the time to pave the ground with obsidian, a matching wall caging the entire thing in. His heart sinks in realization.

The smooth stone would be impossible to climb, he could tell just looking at it.

He looks closer at the bars of the balcony, decorated profusely in little swirls and writing he can't read. So much detail is built into this place. It's the most beautiful cage he's ever seen, and he despises it.

DreamXD moves to flip a switch on the wall beside him, and the world is suddenly much brighter. Tall flames shoot out from the walls surrounding the prison, illuminating everything inside. This must've been the thing he'd seen glowing in the distance. The stained glass probably looks stunning from the inside right now, George thinks.

Warmth from the flames soaks into his skin, and he shivers at the comfort.

"Say something."

George turns to look at his captor. He has no words, but he tries to follow the order nonetheless. The words hurt his throat.

"It's...very pretty."

DreamXD doesn't seem satisfied with this, but he doesn't push, getting more impatient by the second.

"It was meant to be yours."

George doesn't expect that. He'd expected rage, sadness, some horrific violence, but not this. He hadn't expected to feel the need to be grateful, but he does.



“...Thank you.” It comes out as a whisper.

DreamXD lets out a dry laugh at that, and the hair on the back of George’s neck stands straight up.

“Oh, no. No, George,” the god starts, voice dark and venomous. “You broke your promise. You tried to *leave* , and friends *don’t* leave. This,” he gestures at everything around them, again. “ *-was* meant to be yours. But it’s *not* . Not anymore.”

George swallows, and a horrible feeling works its way through him.

DreamXD grabs his arm again, turning to walk back inside. George trips as he’s pulled backwards, but manages to keep his footing.

“We were going to have so much fun, George,” The door slams behind them. “We were going to cook together. I was going to help you learn to fly,” The fire outside is extinguished, and the room is dim. “We were going to be happy.”

His grip on George’s arm tightens, and he yanks the smaller closer, no longer caring to be gentle.

“But you,” he sits on the bed, pulling George with him. “You were selfish. All you’ve ever wanted is what I can give you.” His arm is looped around the brunette's neck now, and when George tries to pull it off of him, he finds the grip to be solid. It’s like clawing at iron with your bare hands, he can’t get a grip on it.

“You never actually wanted to be my friend, George.” George is kicking now, his wings pushing back against DreamXD, trying to get out of his hold.

“DreamXD, please-”

An arm slams down on his legs, and he hears a crack. If the left wasn’t already broken, it is now. A silent scream rips itself from his lungs, and he arches upwards in pain.



“Stop.”

Hot tears pool in his eyes, but he can't make a sound.

“I never understood you,” DreamXD's grip on his neck tightens, and George can't breathe, cant see, can't *think*.

“-and I guess I never will.”

Not a noise escapes George as his life is choked away. His energy quickly drains, and he can't bring himself to scrape at the unforgiving arm around his neck any longer. Stars creep into the corners of his vision; all he can do is listen to his own heartbeat and close his eyes, allowing the last tears he'll shed to fall, soaking the fabric of DreamXD's robes.

He dies there, weak and exhausted, crying into the lap of someone who promised to be his friend without understanding the meaning of the word.

-

On the seventh day, George is cold.

## Chapter End Notes

well. i'm gonna be gone for about a week, working on the next couple chapters. i'll probably upload a seperate, unrelated fic on wednesday though. if you're looking for something to pass the time, i have other fics (winks at u). i also have some public recs if you scroll down my acct, those fics are amazing, please go show them some love too. as always, thank you so much for reading, i hope you all have wonderful days.



## XIV

### Chapter Summary

\*taps microphone\* hey guys i'm back-

This takes place between day five and six.

cw for blood

### Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

A red sun has just sunk under the horizon, and Sapnap is on his way home when he hears the rustling thumps of a dog's paws against a leafy forest floor. He turns towards the sound just in time to see the animal sprint past him, its white fur a striking contrast in the dark. It makes it a few paces past him before stopping, sensing the eyes on its back.

The dog turns, its ears tilting back at the sudden silence as Sapnap watches its wide eyes glance around and eventually settle on him. It looks scared, and the red glow peeking through the trees surrounding them seems to discolor the animal's fur just slightly. Boredom soaks into Sapnap's features, and he sighs.

Tired and not thinking much of it, Sapnap lunges forward, feigning an attack. The dog immediately flinches back, its ears fluttering completely against its head. Sapnap yells, a loud and intimidating noise, very obviously meant to shoo the animal away. When it doesn't move, Sapnap groans, turning away. He won't waste any more time here. Pinching the bridge of his nose between his thumb and index finger, he begins again on his journey home.

He'll need to sprint if he wants to beat the darkness back.

-

The night passes like any other, and it leaves the grass dewy and sparkling the next morning. It's a bit windy when Sapnap sets out for the day, and he hears the trees rustling above him. It's a bright morning, and he has nothing planned. Karl's gone on one of his trips again, and he's left to his own devices.



With practiced movements, he makes his way out of the woods surrounding his home. A vague pathway has formed over the last couple months, he's walked this path over and over again. He could put stepping stones down, he figures. Karl would probably like them. He'd been working on a gift idea for his fiancée for quite some time. The taller had been kind enough to build him a fire pit when they moved in together, and Sapnap had felt himself melt at the gesture.

A twig snaps in the distance, and he's pulled from the thought. Looking up quickly, he searches for the source of the noise.

There on the path just ahead of him is the dog, lightly panting in the early morning humidity. Its tongue hangs out just slightly, and Sapnap frowns at its calm demeanor. He thought it would have been long gone by this point.

Stepping closer, he holds his hands up, shoving his empty palms forward.

"I don't have any food," he explains, his voice tired. "Go on, shoo."

The animal stands up, its tail wagging slightly. It only walks forward, presumably taking Sapnap's show of empty hands as kindness. As it approaches, Sapnap notices dark brown streaked through the white fur on its left side, and made the fluff on its paws stick out. It's...almost red.

Looking closer now, it's definitely blood. The animal had to have gotten its paws on a rabbit at some point. *Nice*, he thinks.

The dog stops in front of him again, and now its tail is wagging quicker, obviously excited about something. Sapnap rolls his eyes, and considers killing the animal. He doesn't really want to deal with the repercussions of that though, so he suffices by pushing past it.

There's a scrape on his leg.

"What the-"

Heavy paws land on his hip and he loses his balance, and he yells out as he falls against a tree. The dog follows him down, nosing into his pocket, presumably for food. Its teeth close over a small



white strip of fabric, and it rips the cloth away from Sapnap, who's already gaining back his footing.

"Hey, give that back!"

The dog backs up a couple paces, it's wide eyes glued to him. Sapnap groans and lunges forward to snatch the bandanna back, but the cloth is just out of reach. He growls in annoyance, and stands back up.

Noticing Sapnap is now chasing it, the dog turns, and begins to sprint towards the beach.

-

Somehow, the dog manages to stay ahead of Sapnap. It's a trying feat, but it seems four legs are better than two. The sun has made its way into the sky by the time the shore is in sight, brightening the sand and reminding the sky of its cerulean beauty.

Sapnap nearly trips as the rocky dirt switches to thin sugar sand, and the dog slows to a stop where the sand is darker, dropping Sapnap's bandana onto the wet ground. Positively annoyed at this point, the human scowls down at the animal, and bends to pick up the cloth before it can be stolen again.

He stops when he sees it's soaked up something from the sand, leaving it a light red. He's careful not to touch the red spots as he wraps his fingers around the white material. Glancing up, the dark spot of sand is bigger than he'd thought. Too big to just be a rabbit. He looks back to the dog, confusion etched into his brow.

The sea rises and laps at his ankles before he can move away from it, dragging some of the red sand down with it in its retreat. Noticing the bloodied sand higher up is still dry, Sapnap wonders how big the original puddle must've been.

*It could be a cow*, he thought. But what would lead a cow to a beach? There were no bones, no carcass to be seen around him... He looked back to the dog, which had settled itself on its hind legs to watch him. Surely the tiny thing couldn't have eaten something so large.

An unsettling thought dragged it's heavy feet over the floor of his mind, and looked away from the



mess. *It could be from a person* . He hadn't heard of any fights recently, and couldn't think of any ongoing conflicts that would warrant this bloody a battle, but it seemed to be the most obvious option.

Maybe whoever had died here had been this dog's owner. He frowned at the realization, suddenly feeling a pang of guilt. He turns to the animal.

"I'm sorry," he whispers, trying to ignore the fact that it definitely doesn't understand him.

*Might as well figure out who's gone.*

He reaches into his inventory carefully, and his hand closes around a couple sticks of TNT. He waves his hand at the dog behind him, a clear warning of the noise to come. Touching his hand to the fuse of the explosive, he lets red-hot warmth pool in his palm and spread to his fingers, giving him pins and needles. The fuse lights with a fizzle, and soon tiny sparks are shooting out in every direction, a signal to throw the stick.

Sapnap steps away just enough to remain unharmed before covering his ears, his hands still hot to the touch. He turns to watch as the explosives go off, blowing the water out of the ocean. It rises up like magic, the clear droplets catching the sun and scattering its light all around in a burst of sharp clarity. He doesn't dwell long on the aesthetic of it though, eyes moving to scan the ocean's floor for a body, a set of armor, a weapon that might indicate who fought here.

He sees nothing.

The mismatched marbles of saltwater all come tumbling down, distorting and recombining as they fall, once again obscuring his vision. Pursing his lips, he looks back to the dog, only to find that it's left. He doesn't blame the thing, he would run too if his ears worked as well as he knows theirs do.

A loud crack shakes the ground to the left of him, and he whips around just in time to watch a bat fly out from the new crevice he's just created in the stone sticking slightly out from the water. Curious, he walks over to the crumbling rock, careful not to step on anything that could collapse under him.

He comes to a stop in front of what seems to be the top of a cave, cracked open by his own carelessness. Sunlight now streams into the small room, illuminating the pool in the center of the ground, and dark moss reflects a brighter shade of green than he'd expect it to be under shade.



Leaning down, he finds there to be a small, soggy book lying next to the water.

*How did that get there?*

Careful not to slip, he guides his legs over the edge of the hole, and hops down into the cave. He lands with a loud stomp, which echoes through the cave and down what looks to be a hallway connected to the room. Okay, now he's really intrigued.

He picks up the wet book between his thumb and index finger, completely expecting something to crawl out of it. Nothing does, so he reads the cover.

*Recipes for Beginners .*

It's a cookbook. A very boringly titled one, at that. He shrugs, and lets it drop to the ground with a wet flopping sound.

That's when he sees it.

A bloody trail smeared on the stone floor, clear evidence of a struggle painted in dark red stripes and puddles. *Shit.*

His footsteps come faster as he follows the markings, and the world around him becomes nothing but a faded blur behind his hyper-focused mind. He faintly picks up on the fact that he's in a system of caves redesigned to be rooms, some with chests and bookshelves. It's all an afterthought though, because the puddles are getting larger and the lines smoother and he can tell that whoever was dragged here eventually stopped struggling, which wasn't a good sign.

He breathes out small curses and walks faster, eventually reaching a room with some kind of forever hole, framed by odd-looking stones. From where he's standing, he can swear it's filled with stars. Yet still, this is the least worrying thing about the room, because there's a dark puddle the size of a small rug draped over the platform surrounding the starry opening.

He gags, the smell of iron suddenly thick in the air. He won't check, but he can assume the blood is still tacky, and relatively fresh.



His mind is suddenly reeling with possibilities of what had happened, where he was, and who had done this. *Oh* , he screws his eyes shut, and *who* had this done to them .

*Let's see* ...Karl was accounted for, he'd seen him just yesterday. Q hadn't been anywhere near this place in forever, and he would have heard if any of the server's children had gone missing. Sam was always at the prison, and Dream...well. Techno hadn't attacked anyone for a while now, he seemed pretty civil these days. He'd know if anything happened to Bad, and he thought he'd seen smoke coming from Niki's chimney recently. So, Fundy? Maybe, but there was a significant lack of fur here.

So that left...

It clicks, and he feels a sick hum climb its way up his throat. His stomach is suddenly inside out, and he feels like he could faint.

His shaky vision centers and focuses on a single bloody handprint on the ground near his feet, and he slams a hand over his mouth to keep from screaming. It's definitely human, and it's size and shape are all too familiar to be a coincidence.

George. It would make so much sense if it was George.

"Oh, fuck."

## Chapter End Notes

Sorry for being late, you know how life is. Uhh so this is probably my least favorite chapter ever because I wasn't able to add much life there. But whatever, bc I like the next one a lot more. That should be up tomorrow. That's right hotties, we are back on our daily grind. Also, I'm sure you'll notice there's a little 14/26 up there on the "Chapters:" thing. This is an estimation. Crazy how we're only halfway through, but I promised a therapy arc and I won't let myself disappoint. As always, thank you for reading, I hope you're all doing well.



## Chapter Summary

sapnap gets help. not the mental kind. yet. hmmm.

## Chapter Notes

so fun fact, the google doc i've been using to write this has begun to lag due to the sheer size of it. i am a god.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

With trembling hands and a stinging heart, Sapnap makes his way out of the maze-like structure. He doesn't have a plan, but he knows he needs to tell someone, anyone. The information burns a hole in his tongue, and he's dying to let the words spill.

The perfect day feels more like a cruel joke now, its taunting blue sky and quiet peacefulness a mockery of his distress. Sapnap would burn it all down if he could. But he shouldn't- not without being sure. Of course, the thought of George being hurt or lost is upsetting, but he won't lose himself to an unconfirmed theory.

So on he goes, his hair picking up wind and tangling behind his ears. He keeps his teeth grit as the ground blurs below him, and he sets his eyes on the prison. Telling Sam is probably for the best, but it's not what's pulling him there.

When you're afraid you've lost one friend, it seems like the obvious option is to go running to the other.

The building approaches in its massive way, throwing a shadow over Sapnap as he gets closer. Sam is not at the entrance today, so Sapnap lights the ground on fire. Light smoke drifts into the air, the grass writhing in the heat like tons of small snakes who'd poked their noses out of the ground at the wrong time.

“What are you doing?!”



The warden appears beside him in record time, reaching into his inventory already for a water bucket. He finds one and pours its contents onto the scorched ground, waving a dark-nailed hand across the air in front of him to clear it from smoke.

Sapnap gets straight to the point. "George is missing. Do you know if anyone's been living near the beach?"

He points the way he came, impatiently waiting for Sam's reply.

Sam frowns. "I- No, Sapnap. I haven't."

He carefully puts away his now-empty bucket before looking up again. "Hasn't George been gone for a while now?"

Sapnap nods. "Yes."

The smoke has mostly cleared, and now it's just them staring at each other.

"So..? Why are you worried now?"

Sapnap wishes he could drop the information on the ground, let Sam pick it up and process it for himself. But he can't so he begins to explain.

"On the beach, there's this dog," Sam is already glancing away, not listening. "There's a cave, it's like, under the water-"

"You're setting things on fire for a dog?"

"What? No, there's like, a lot of blood too." He takes a breath to steady himself. "And I think it's George's."



That gets Sam's attention. "Wh- Blood? Are you sure?"

Sapnap scoffs, reaching forward to grab Sam by the arm. "Yes, I'm pretty fucking sure, come look."

Sam can't even get a word out before he's being tugged toward the direction of the beach. Sapnap is much faster than him, and it takes quite a bit of effort to keep up with him once they begin to run. The trees flow past like mile markers, and Sam could almost be sick at the exertion. It's not that he's not strong, but he's wearing heavy armor that Sapnap isn't, and he's not built to handle the heat gathering around them as the shorter weaves through the trees like some acrobatic cat.

They make it to the beach, and the sun reflecting off the sand only serves to make matters worse. Sam stands over the small puddle of blood staining the shore.

"Is this what you were talking about?" he asks, unimpressed.

Sapnap is already atop the rock, waving the taller over with obvious urgency, and Sam begrudgingly follows. The stone is slick under his boots, but he manages not to fall.

He follows Sapnap's line of vision to the hole in the rock, its jagged edges suggesting it didn't occur naturally. He sighs.

"Sapnap, is this some sort of joke?" he asks, ready to leave.

"No," Sapnap replies curtly, sitting down to swing his legs into the cave.

"Woah, wait-" Sam starts, watching as Sapnap pushes himself up so that he's only dangling. "Careful!"

Sapnap's feet hit the ground, and he looks up to Sam, waiting for him to follow.

Sam is more cautious with his movements, but catches up in a matter of seconds, suddenly very aware of the serious look on Sapnap's face. Glancing around, he notices something resembling a hallway leading out of their confined space. It's obviously not natural, but it's not a new build



either. In fact, it looks like it could've been built ages ago. The amount of moss in the crevices of the cave is nothing recent.

"What is this?" he mumbles, almost speaking to himself. "Sapnap?"

"I don't know. Sam, look at this."

Turning to face Sapnap, Sam is pushed back. He looks up, confused, and Sapnap points down at his shoes.

"Sorry- Didn't want you to step in it."

Sam looks down, and instantly understands when he sees the dried spot of blood on the ground. "Oh."

Stepping in the direction of the hallway, Sapnap points out where the dark red stain becomes more of a trail, scraped along the floor in chaotic spasms, an obvious sign of fighting. It leads them through several hallways and rooms, until they finally reach the end. Sapnap looks to him for a reaction, but Sam doesn't know what to think.

"Oh...this looks really bad, Sapnap," he says. "Like, really bad."

"I know."

"Whoever- This person might have died."

"I know, Sam."

Quiet falls between the two of them, and the mood is dampened by what's been implied.

"You think this was George?" Sam asks, finally looking up again.



“Yes,” Sapnap says.

Careful to step over the blood pooling on the floor, Sam approaches the star-filled box. “What is this?”

Sapnap follows, and swipes his hand over the darkness to check it’s temperature. It was no different from the rest of the room, but something told him his fire wouldn’t make it any warmer, either. This was something else, entirely. “I’m not sure.”

“Do you think he’s *in* there?”

Sapnap considers it, and realizes it’s not that far-fetched an idea. After all, the trail does end here, and this could very well be some new type of portal. The proposition roots like a seed in his mind, and he’s quickly beginning to believe it. Still, because he’s unsure, he replies, “I don’t know,”.

Sam takes one last look at the thing before turning away. “Come on, let’s get out.”

Sapnap doesn’t argue, quietly following him back the way they came.

-

“I think Phil might know something about the portal. He’s read a lot about old myths and shit looking for ways to get Wilbur back,” Sam says, walking quickly through the woods, Sapnap not far behind.

“Portal?”

“The black hole thing. I think that’s what it is,” the warden explains.

“Oh,” Sapnap takes a quick glance up, the prison is back in sight. “Could you send him a message?”

“Maybe. I think so, at least.”



They step out from beneath the cover of the trees, and Sapnap reaches into his inventory, tearing a page out of one of his books. “Do you have a pen?”

Sam quickly provides one, and Sapnap hums in gratitude. He quickly scribbles out a couple words.

*Need your help, found a portal hole thing. Sam said you'd know more. Please come quick.*

*-sapnap*

He shoves it back to Sam. “Is this good?”

Sam spends less than five seconds looking it over, and squints at the paper. “No, definitely not. But it doesn't matter, I'll be talking to him anyways.”

Sapnap rolls his eyes at the disapproval, but nods appreciatively when Sam says he'll deliver the message.

“We should get going now, it could be dark by the time we get back,” Sam mentions, already starting off in a new direction.

“Wait,” Sapnap reaches out to touch his shoulder, “can I stay?”

Sam tilts his head at the question. “You just want to stay here? Why?”

“No, I mean- Can I please talk to...”

He points a thumb behind him, and it becomes clear what he's asking.



“You want to visit *Dream* ..?”

Sapnap tries to keep his voice level, hoping it will increase his chances of getting permission. “Um, yeah. If that’s okay?”

Considering it for a moment, Sam looks him up and down. “I mean, I wouldn’t be here to let you out, Sapnap. You’d be stuck until I got back. I’m not really sure that’s a good idea.”

Sapnap rushes a reply, the words already on his tongue. “I’ll be okay. I already signed the papers, I know the rules. It’s okay.”

Sam stares in concerned silence, unsure of whether to trust Sapnap or just bring him along to be safe.

“Please, Sam.”

Well...

“Okay, come on. Let’s be quick.”

## Chapter End Notes

idk if i'll be able to update tomorrow due to god nerfing me. also i forgot to say this yesterday but HAPPY PRIDE MONTH!! i hope you guys are all doing well, and thank you for reading.



# XVI

## Chapter Summary

prison dreamnap, you know the drill

cw for panic attacks

## Chapter Notes

update on google doc : absolutely destroyed. how could lord google fail me like this.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

They make their way through the safety precautions smoothly, having done them time and time again over several months. The platform drags him across the lava safely, and before he knows it, he's made it to Dream's cell, standing just beyond the bar keeping the prisoner from burning himself to death. Dream sleeps soundly on the other side, and Sapnap wonders how tired he has to be to sleep through the noise of this arrival.

Sam drops the barrier, and Sapnap steps inside. They say their goodbyes, and it's obvious Sam still isn't quite confident in this plan. He knows there will be at least some discussion of what they've discovered, and he worries that Dream may turn violent at the implications.

Sam has grown fond of Sapnap these past couple months. Somewhere in between the respectful nods and polite hellos, he must've grown attached, because the moment Sapnap is out of sight, he's turning around, quietly peeking around the wall to catch the lava just begin to drape over the cell. He watches quietly as the molten liquid makes it halfway down. He can't resist letting his words echo through the space between them.

"Stay safe, Sapnap!"

The other turns around, and smiles fondly at Sam, just as the lava blocks his face.

Sam can handle that. He feels much better now. Still not great, but better.



He pushes down the worry, and puts the barrier back up, leaving Sapnap behind. He's already sprinting by the time he's made it out of the prison, anxious to get back as early as possible.

-

Dream barely stirs as the lava covers them, and Sapnap settles himself on the floor, leaning gently against the bed. The room is quiet, and he can't help but listen to the way his friend breathes. Unlike most things, it hasn't changed. Dream has always had a slight snore when he sleeps, not noticeable to most, but Sapnap had always teased him about it when they were younger.

He turns to watch the blonde resting, and smiles gently at the sight. Though he'd come in here to deliver upsetting news, he couldn't bring himself to disturb this peace. Dream seemed so much more recognizable when he was asleep, after all. The scars on his face lost all their formidable facade when he was relaxed. The conniving grin he'd so often wear was reduced to the small smile he used to sport when he was still the Dream that Sapnap had known.

If he let himself, it would be easy for Sapnap to pretend that nothing had changed.

"Dream?" he says, his voice barely vibrating in his throat. The other doesn't stir.

Despite how on-edge he's feeling, he won't let this moment escape him. Sam wasn't going to be back for a while anyways, so what was the harm?

He leans his head back, and lets his eyes fall closed.

-

"Sapnap?"

Dream forgets he's supposed to be quiet, and when Sapnap's head lifts from the bed, he decides to give up on the stupid strike.

His former friend blinks at him, slightly drowsy.



“How long have you been here?” he asks, tone accusatory.

Sapnap rubs at his eyes, and responds through a yawn. “I’m not sure- Oh, man.” He shakes the sleep from his head. “A while, I guess.”

There’s a moment of quiet before Dream huffs, and slides his legs over the edge of the bed, making room for the visitor.

“Oh.”

“Well, you look stupid sitting on the floor,” Dream explains, always so polite.

Sapnap smiles a little at that, and tries to keep his expression neutral as he remembers what he’s here to do. He brings his hands together to crack his knuckles, a nervous tic he’d developed over his time spent fighting.

He might as well rip off the bandaid. Lifting himself off the floor and onto the bed, Sapnap starts to tell his story. “So, yesterday-”

“Why are you here?”

Sapnap blinks.

Dream persists. “You’re off schedule. You aren’t supposed to be here.”

The words take a couple seconds to sink in, Sapnap is a bit taken off guard by how much he’s just heard Dream speak. It’s been so long, *too* long, since he’s heard much more than a mumble come from the boy. Their last verbal exchange had been the closest thing to conversation they’d had in what felt like forever, and Sapnap wasn’t sure he’d recovered from it yet.

He nods, and begins again, approaching his words differently this time. “Yeah, well I have something important to tell you.”



He doesn't know why he stops, but Dream sits up straighter to listen. "What?"

Deep breaths. *Okay*. "Yesterday, I saw this dog," he starts, hoping he doesn't sound shaky. "I didn't think much of it at the time, but it was there this morning too, and-" he stops, realization dawning on him. "And I think it might be George's."

Dream perks up at the name. "He's back?"

Sapnap starts to shake his head, "No, bu-"

"Can you ask him to visit me?" Dream says, not quite catching Sapnap's words. They sink in after he's spoken though, and he ducks his head dejectedly.

Sapnap cringes internally at the mishap, but tries to continue. "Dream, we think something happened to George."

Quiet stills the air, and Dream can't find the words to break it.

Sapnap continues. "I was chasing the dog, it stopped at the beach. There was blood on the sand," he says. "There was also this, um...cave. It was pretty bloody too."

Dream finds his voice again, and his words are filled with nervous suspicion. "I don't understand, why would that be from George?"

"I figured it was the dog's owner. There was too much blood for it to be another dog," he starts, the other words sitting on his tongue in nervous hesitation. He looks down. "Also, his handprint was there." His voice is quiet, and he can feel Dream's gaze on him.

He looks up, and they lock eyes. "No one else is missing, Dream."

The silence is suffocating. It stands like an invisible wall between them, and Sapnap can only watch as Dream processes what he's said, paralyzed by the sudden severity of it all.



Faint breaths get quicker, and Dream looks at him for something, any sign that this might be a joke, or some cruel lie. Finding nothing he wants to see, he shuts his eyes, and the darkness sends him spinning. He reaches up to hold his own head still, but suddenly the breaths aren't reaching his lungs, and shit, is he even breathing in the first place?

"You..." he whispers, throat closing in on his words.

Sapnap snaps out of the still trance he's fallen into. "Dream?" He waves a hand in front of the prisoner, but Dream doesn't respond. "Hey, come on, look up."

Dream covers his ears. He can faintly hear Sapnap speaking, but it's too much, he can't even focus on breathing. His lungs won't budge.

"Dream, breathe." There's a hand on his back, and he presses back against the feeling, trying to push it away. Sapnap keeps it there though, in an effort to anchor him.

This has happened before, but it's been so long that he's surprised Sapnap remembers what to do. God, they must've still been kids the last time he'd fallen apart like this. He lets out a strangled noise, and bends over himself.

"Ah, no-" Sapnap comes down with him, trying to get a better look at his face.

"You need to sit back up, Dream."

The blonde shakes his head slightly, and it's as if he's deflating. His lungs are trapped in a balloon, and it's been popped, shriveling back up like a raisin. All the noise dulls around him, and the edges of his vision fuzz to static black, something he's pretty sure isn't just a side effect of having his eyes closed.

He can feel Sapnap trying to pull him back up, so he tenses, locking himself in place. The static caves in over his eyes, he's pretty sure it's surrounded him by now. His heartbeat is the only clear noise he's aware of before it all stops, and he's gone.



Sapnap rearranges his friend carefully, taking comfort in the way his chest is back to rising and falling normally. He really wishes he'd said things differently. If he had known it would send Dream into unconsciousness, he would have been less blunt.

Dream stirs next to him, coming back quickly from his crash, and Sapnap puts a hand on his arm. Just in case. He shakes the boy gently, hoping to wake him as soon as possible. He has no idea how long Sam has been gone, but he needs to talk to Dream before he returns.

"Don't touch me," his friend says, just under his breath. Sapnap doesn't miss the venom in his voice.

He brushes it off, and pulls back his hand. "I want to go after him."

That gets Dream's attention. He's sitting up again in a matter of seconds. "He's not dead?"

"No-" Sapnap starts, and Dream lets out a sharp exhale, relief flooding his expression. "Well, I don't think so. We just couldn't get to him, there's this portal- Well, Sam thinks it's a portal, and we think he's gone through it...Why are you looking at me like that?"

The prisoner blinks, his expression switching from relief to relaxed seriousness.

"I thought..." Dream stops, considering his next words. "Shit, Sapnap. I thought *you'd* killed him-"

Sapnap jerks back, shocked. "What?"

"-just so I'd revive him."

Oh.

"What the fuck, I would never-" Sapnap starts, offense leaking into his tone.



“I know, I know,” Dream breathes, already regretting his admission.

“Well obviously you didn’t!” Sapnap near shouts, genuinely hurt. “I would never do that to you, or to George.”

*You put me in here*, Dream thinks, but he keeps that to himself. “You have to get me out,” he insists instead. “If George is really hurt, I need you to get me out.”

Sapnap throws his hands up, annoyance clear in his expression. “Yeah, that’s what I’m here to talk about, if you’d just listen!”

He tries not to dwell on the way Dream flinches back, and takes a long breath before continuing.

“We don’t know what’s on the other side of the portal, and if Sam or I die, we’ll never come back.”

Dream waits with bated breath, the smallest twinge of hope in his chest ready to break out.

“I think you should come with us.” *I want you to be there.*

The words hang in the air like a gift from the heavens, and before Dream can think of a response, they hear a loud clicking from behind the lava.

Sam’s back.

## Chapter End Notes

now that i think about it...it might be fun to write a story where they actually do kill george just to get dream to revive him. hmm. anyways, i was pretty anxious about this chapter, but i hope it reads okay. also, i probably won’t be able to update tomorrow, i have to go on a really long drive. sorry about that. hope you guys are doing well.







## XVII

### Chapter Summary

dreamnap angst gang come get ur juice

### Chapter Notes

spoom? late? surely not....  
my laptop actually hashtag died and it was very sad and i wrote a eulogy and i cried  
and i bought a coffin but then at the funeral service i played the glee version of don't  
stop believing and it worked again. god bless.  
(also,,,yk. other life stuff lol)

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Sapnap can hear the lava beginning to fall, the wall will come down soon. He turns to Dream.

“You trust me, right?”

Dream nods, opening his mouth to speak again. “Please-”

Sapnap shushes him, and shakes his head. “I need to be the one talking to Sam. He won’t listen to you.”

They make eye contact, and Sapnap feels a twinge of nervousness push on his chest.

Dream nods again. “I know, I know. I just-”

He doesn’t get to finish, because Sam’s voice is suddenly filling the space between them, concerned and anxious. “Sapnap! Are you okay?!”

Sapnap responds quickly, trying to keep from getting distracted. “I’m fine!”



He turns back to Dream. “Sorry. What were you saying?”

The taller stutters out a string of I’s and You’s before giving up, leaning forward to wrap his arms around the other in a quick embrace. Words often fail, but this never has. It’s quick and simple and light and fast but it’s filled with gratitude, and Sapnap squeezes back gently. It’s a *thank you*, it’s a *you’re welcome*. It’s a weak spark of what their friendship used to be, but with a little time and shelter from the wind, it might just ignite into something much warmer.

It’s over the second the lava wall lowers enough for them to notice, and Dream tries to wipe the relieved expression off his face before Sam can see them again. They distance themselves from each other, and Sapnap steps to the edge of the cell, right where the bar is keeping him from jumping out completely. His eyes don’t completely leave Dream, he won’t let them. That coldness will not step between them again, with its heavy footsteps and bridge-burning skin, he won’t allow it.

Sam calls out again. “I’m sending the platform over,” and then, more quietly, “Dream, get against the back wall please.”

Dream is already there though, and Sapnap is thankful for his cooperation. As he’s stepping back onto the platform, he glances back quickly, flashing a small smile at the blonde. *I’ll see you soon, I promise.*

Dream doesn’t smile back, but just as the lava begins to fall back over him, he whispers out the words he couldn’t let slip when Sapnap was still in earshot.

“Thank you.”

-

Sapnap’s face-to-face with Sam in a matter of seconds, and before he’s even stepped off the platform, he’s noticed someone is missing.

“Did you find Phil?” he asks.

Sam shakes his head, and Sapnap can tell he’s tired. “I couldn’t get to him, I gave the note to one of his crows.”



Sapnap cringes at the idea that they might have wasted time, but tries not to show it. Sam doesn't need any more discouragement, and he still has a particularly sensitive question to ask.

Sam notices anyway.

"I'm sorry Sapnap." he sighs.

Sapnap snaps back without hesitation. "It's fine. Don't worry about it."

They look at each other, and there's a mutual understanding that they're both thinking of potential solutions. Sam doesn't miss Sapnap's calmer tone, and he wonders what the other might have thought of.

"What did you and Dream talk about?"

It's a fair question. Usually, Sapnap would consider it intrusive or rude, but Sam has reasons to be worried right now. That doesn't change the fact that he has no idea how to answer.

"Um, just...all this. I guess." He settles on the words, but he knows they aren't enough to explain away Sam's question.

The warden squints at him slightly, and he knows better than to wait much longer. The longer he waits, the more likely George is suffering for his indecision.

"I think he'd be useful. If we brought him along, I mean."

Sam frowns, and Sapnap rushes to explain.

"He can revive people, we don't know what's behind the portal."

"Sapnap..."



“Sam, I’m serious. We need him.”

Sam’s expression hardens, and he takes a step back. “You don’t know that.”

“I- Sam, George is in danger. He might even be dead by now. Please, let him come.”

Sapnap sounds stressed at this point, and Sam considers the proposition. He has a point, but is this really worth letting the server’s most dangerous criminal out of prison? But then again, why keep him alive in the first place if not for situations like these? He acknowledges that this could all be some elaborate setup, though it’s unlikely. He looks to Sapnap, who’s still staring with that serious pleading expression. Is he really going to let this happen?

Yes.

“We’re not doing this without a plan,” he says, voice firm.

Sapnap smiles, and launches into explanation.

-

Dream can’t hear them any longer, but he believes Sapnap will follow through with his plan. He has to, after all. The idea of any other scenario would be too much to bear, he thinks. He leans forward and presses his palms to the obsidian walls. They’re slightly warm from the lava outside, and he desperately wishes they would melt beneath his fingers, that he could slip through and escape all this.

He’s held slight resentment for Sapnap ever since he entered this dark little box, but he couldn’t help but let some of the grudge slip from his heart at the other’s generosity. If he were in Sapnap’s position, he’s not sure he would have done the same. Telling the most guarded criminal on the server troubling news while you’re completely unarmed took balls, he had to admit.

Sapnap has always been braver than him, though. His hands twitch at the thought of all the things he’d seen the younger do without falter, all the times he’d wondered who he was really friends with. He couldn’t understand how someone so fiery and unpredictable could come from parents



like Sapnap's. They were polar opposites. Sapnap knew it too, he'd often expressed his feelings of inadequacy to Dream.

*"I just feel out of place."*

And when the time came where Dream had to get rid of him, he would confirm those feelings. At first it was little things, like snapping at him for being too loud or too touchy. Then it was comparing him to others. As much as the younger tried to fix himself, Dream wouldn't relent. There was always something to criticize, and Dream would spend so much time looking for it that he'd actually begin to hate his friend. Finally, all he had to do was stop listening, and Sapnap would get the message.

He hadn't meant any of it, though. Not at first at least. *Maybe never*, his subconscious whispers.

A stone falls from the wall around his heart, and for a second he feels the guilt building behind the dam trickle through.

The fact that Sapnap is *still* helping him is almost enough to send it tumbling down.

He pushes back against the wall again, standing up straight to distance himself from the feeling. He tangles a hand in his hair in an attempt to pull the stress away.

God, he hopes he dies before he has to deal with his emotions.

## Chapter End Notes

also, weird upload time i know. i just didn't wanna make y'all wait longer. sorry for the short chapter, the next one is extra long. i might not release it for a bit though, i wanna make these next few chapters as perfect as possible. anyways, thank you so much for reading, hope you're all doing well !! <3

also. the doc is now two parts. to my dismay.



## XVIII

### Chapter Summary

we r getting out the prison woo yeah woo yeah

### Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

It takes a lot of negotiation, a lot of pleading, a lot of ‘I promise he won’t’s to get Sam to agree to the plan, but they get there eventually. Sapnap almost jumps out of happiness at the outcome, and Sam smiles at him in miserable unsureness. He knows it’s the best option, but he wishes there was a better one nonetheless.

They make their way through the dark halls, gathering supplies and materials for the trip. They go their separate ways at one point, and the sheer size of the prison is once again brought to Sapnap’s attention. He doesn’t know why Sam worries about Dream escaping this. He might as well have encapsulated the boy in fifty tons of iron. He practically had. Dream was as good as paralyzed.

They rendezvous at the entrance to Dream’s cell, and Sapnap is quick to suggest he be the one carrying the handcuffs, but Sam brushes off the idea.

“I’m already risking a lot here, I’ll do it,” the warden says. Sapnap doesn’t argue.

They shine a dark purple, fashioned out of obsidian and iron. They must’ve been the same one’s they’d brought Dream in with, and Sapnap swallows hard at the idea. He’d been feeling some cocktail of guilt and anger the last time he’d seen these, his hand on the shoulder of someone who’d lost respect for him months prior. It still hurt though, to lock away his best friend like some sort of circus animal. Though, Dream had planned to do that to Skeppy (which he might’ve laughed about if it wasn’t such a serious threat), so he guessed it evened out.

But now, looking back at the sleek rings of stone, he just feels pity. He’s sure Dream will remember them just as well, the little things might as well be the solid manifestation of déjà vu. In the last moments before he’d been dragged over to his cell, Dream had been straining desperately against them, almost dislocating his shoulder in the struggle. Sapnap had almost smiled then, it had felt like some sort of accomplishment. But now, without constantly seeing the products of Dream’s wickedness, he was only left missing his friend. Hopefully Dream wouldn’t put up too much of a fight with them.



They were back in front of the lava before they knew it, and Sam looked over to Sapnap, hand resting on the lever. “You’re absolutely sure about this?”

Sapnap nods. “I am.”

Sam pulls the lever, and the lava begins to fall.

-

Dream notices it start, and steps to the front of his cage immediately, knotting his fingers together anxiously. He’s bouncing on his heels just slightly. Yes, he knows this is for something important, he knows he should be focused on what he’s doing this for, but he can’t help the way his breath is hitching at the thought of leaving this cell.

“Dream!” Sam calls, tone as stiff and demanding as ever.

The lava uncovers the opening of the cell, and Dream stares back, unsure of how to reply.

“Dream, can you hear me?!” Sam yells.

The prisoner nods, and tries to be loud when he responds. “Yes, I can!”

Sam and Sapnap come into view, and his heart bursts with relief. A good sign, finally.

“Okay! Listen,” Sam continues, gesturing at him. “When I send this platform over, I’m going to lower the bars. You’re going to step on with your back facing me, do you understand?”

Dream takes a moment to process the words, and lets out a shaky breath. He’s really getting out, then. He would crumple to the floor right now if no one were watching.

Finally, his self awareness kicks back in. Nodding, he tries to shout back. “I understand!”



Sam stands there a second longer, staring, picking him apart like some sort of dissected frog. Finally, his eyes move, and he steps away for a moment. Sapnap offers a gentle smile, and flashes a thumbs up at him just as the platform starts moving.

Dream knows he's shaking as he watches it approach, this all feels unreal. It has to be a prank. But the blocks continue to stutter forward, getting closer and closer. They're close enough to make out the small details of their design, they're close enough to throw his clock onto and actually make it, and, oh *fuck*, he could jump on them from this distance now.

With a few more resolute movements, they reach his cell, clanging against the obsidian with a sharp noise. Dream's breathing has grown quicker, and he steps as close as he can, feet stopping right against the barrier.

That is, before it comes sliding down, and suddenly the closest thing to freedom he's had in months is sitting right in front of him. He has to push his hand over his mouth to keep all the air from leaving his lungs.

"Turn around and step on," Sam reminds him. "If you feel like you might fall, sit down."

Dream is grateful for the suggestion, because he currently feels so dizzy that he might not be able to tell the difference between up and down much longer. He's almost nauseous at the feeling, but he could also cry out of happiness.

"Dream?" Sapnap calls, worry lacing his tone.

He looks up, and the younger is staring at him with genuine distress. *Right then.* He needs to get on with it.

He takes a cautious step forward, his foot crossing over the barrier. When he manages not to stumble, he takes another, and another. One more, and he's on the platform. The world is still spinning though, so he carefully slides to the base, his legs crossing underneath him. Once he's down, he shuts his eyes tight, trying to steady himself before he's moving again.

He becomes aware that Sam is talking again. "You need to turn around!"

*Oh, right.* He cracks open his eyes just slightly, and scoots around so that his back is facing Sapnap



and Sam. He's trembling like a leaf in the wind at this point, and a minute later, when the platform beneath him begins to move across the lava again, he has to fold over himself to refrain from falling off.

He looks over his shoulder for a split second. Sapnap is crouched, ready for him to reach them. His arms are held out so that Dream can fall into them and let himself be dragged off the platform. He looks up. Sam is pointing a bow at him, arrow drawn back and ready to hit its mark.

He whips back around, not trying to break any rules. He puts his hands behind his back, where Sam can see them. He lets his eyes fall shut and his body go nearly limp, he will not be mistaken for a threat. He will not mess this up.

A couple more seconds, and he feels himself shake forward slightly as he reaches the other side. Sapnap is on him in an instant, hands careful as they wrap around his stomach and pull him forward. The world has almost stopped spinning by the time he's been completely hoisted to the other side, and Dream lets himself open his eyes.

There in front of him, is a perfect view of the place he's been kept for months. He can see it pretty well, but he wouldn't need binoculars to know what it looks like in there. He's got everything memorized, every little dent and scratch is accounted for. It's so weird being on the outside of it.

Before he can reach up and wipe the remaining dizziness from his eyes, someone is grabbing his wrists, holding them together. He tries to pull away from the feeling, it's all too familiar. His shoulders shake as he struggles to get away from the firm grip around him.

"No! Please, I'll be good, please don't."

"Dream, stop," Sam says. The words are cold and unyielding, and they only make Dream struggle harder. Sam follows him in his struggle, and manages to get one of the cuffs on, a satisfying click resounding from them.

Dream jerks forward, using every ounce of strength in his body to pull away. "Stop, please."

Sapnap is careful when he intervenes. He lightly places his hands over Sam's and says his word quietly. "Let me do this."



Sam stares at him for a second before relenting, and within the next ten seconds, Sapnap is the one holding Dream's wrists. Looking down to them, it suddenly hits him how much weight Dream has lost behind prison doors. He's not starved-looking or bone thin, but he's a lot leaner than before.

Just then Dream hunches over himself again, and Sapnap has to tighten his grip to keep ahold of him. "Hey, it's just me," he says, hoping the other will hear him.

Dream does, and he turns back to look as Sapnap slides the other cuff around his wrist, almost close enough to be clicked close but not quite there yet. Dream looks up to his eyes, begging clear on his features. Sapnap shakes his head, a wordless way of saying *No, this is necessary*.

His eyes sting with tears at the gentle denial, and he holds his breath. Sapnap doesn't break eye contact, only subtly nodding before clicking the second cuff closed. Dream lets out a sharp breath, now completely restrained.

Sapnap leans a little closer to whisper to him. "Only for a little while, just hold on okay?"

Dream nods quickly, and Sam steps forward to put a hand on his shoulder. "Stand up, we need to get moving."

Dream raises on wobbly legs, and as soon as he's upright, Sapnap is speaking again. He begins to describe their plan in careful detail, but Dream lets it fade to background noise because he's suddenly being led away, down the dark hallway he'd thought had been his last sight of freedom.

The scenery reminds him of that first day, where he'd been dragged in here with ruthless force by people who didn't see him as human. It hadn't been a pleasant experience then, and it wasn't one now.

Sam walks ahead of them, and Sapnap keeps a hold on his arm. He catches short bits of the explanation, but not nearly all of it. Even now, when Sapnap is being so friendly, he has to wonder if the other sees him as disposable. After all the shit he'd put everyone through, he wouldn't blame him.

"-when we get there. Try to stay upright, it's not something to step through like a nether portal. I'll st...Dream? Are you okay?" Sapnap is looking back at him, and now he realizes he's stopped walking.



Sam turns around to watch them both, and Dream takes a few quick steps to catch up. “Um. Yeah, sorry.”

Sapnap gives him a look, but continues walking. It takes Sam a few seconds longer to turn back around, and begin walking again.

“Were you listening?” Sapnap asks, voice low.

Dream shakes his head.

Sapnap huffs, but begins his explanation again. “Sam won’t leave you alone, but he also doesn’t want all three of us to go through the portal. Someone has to stay behind to get help in case...you know.”

Dream looks up. *Surely he isn’t implying...*

“So I’ll be staying behind.”

Dream’s stride stutters and almost stops. “You’re leaving me alone with Sam?”

Sapnap’s expression changes then. He’s done this before, he realizes. “Yes, that’s the only way I could get him to agree, Dream.”

He can see fear shoot into the taller’s eyes, and he wishes he could reassure him somehow that Sam wouldn’t hurt him. He realizes Dream might think this was some fake excuse to imprison him somewhere else, or maybe just to kill him in general. There’s no way he could reassure that that wasn’t the case without making it worse though, so he holds his tongue.

Dream is still staring at him, and he can tell he’s thinking over the situation. “Okay,” he says, and his voice sounds on the verge of cracking.

He thinks about how this might very well be the last time he sees Sapnap. The last time he’d thought he might never see him again, he’d been able to worm his way out of dying, the revival book had saved him. It had granted him some sort of power over everyone else on the server,



enough to keep him alive for as long as he needed. Being the only one with this knowledge had given him so much leverage. In the absence of the actual book, he was practically immortal. He was no longer human, at least. He had just the tiniest bit of divinity, enough to make him a god on this server.

But oh, what he'd given up to get here. His strength had been his downfall, selfishness getting the best of him. If he died now, there wouldn't be anything to save him. He'd burnt all his bridges, and they couldn't be repaired. The guilt suddenly rushes over him again.

He stops walking, and Sapnap stops a second later.

“Need a breather?”

He shakes his head.

“Okay, well...” Sapnap gestures forward, and only then does Dream see it.

They've reached the exit.

## Chapter End Notes

woo another chapter out !! i'm more confident in this one, hope you all enjoy it too. i honestly can't believe this story has come so far. thank you all so much. i assure you, the support has not gone unnoticed. i'm genuinely so grateful. also, if anyone has any music recommendations...hand them over. or Else.



## XIX

### Chapter Summary

it's time to say goodbye

### Chapter Notes

thank you all for the music recommendations, i made a playlist out of them :]

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

“You might want to cover your eyes, it’ll probably be brighter out there.”

Sapnap is walking him over to the portal, and Dream can’t believe this is real. Sam goes through the portal before them, and Sapnap taps Dream to get his attention.

“Are you hearing me?”

Dream nods.

“We’re all going to drink an invisibility potion before we step out, just in case someone sees us. Try to keep quiet, Sam doesn’t want anyone to know you’re out,” Sapnap says, brandishing two small vials of light purple liquid. Dream nods, and they step through the portal.

Gentle purple swirls around them, and Dream can’t help but feel like it’s been millenia since he last felt this. He closes his eyes and feels it switch, they’re on the other side now.

Sapnap pulls him down and out of the portal, and he opens his eyes again. It’s barely daylight, but he still squints at the remaining sun that shines in through the entrance. Everything goes slightly blue as his eyes adjust to the new light, and Sapnap pushes something in front of his face.

Oh yeah. The potion. Sapnap puts the small bottle to his lips, and he tilts his head back. He’s being ushered forward as he does, and soon he’s between Sapnap and Sam, both of them holding one of



his arms. Sam pulls them a bit more into the light, adjusting the weight of his bag on his shoulder.

Sapnap's eyes go wide as he realizes exactly how pale Dream has gotten. He's practically a corpse, he's so white. Shit, he needed a sun lamp in his cell or something. He'd make a mental note for that later.

Dream finishes the potion, and his body disappears. Light floats right through him now, he's practically glass. Sapnap and Sam follow soon after, and now it's just a matter of getting the other safely to the beach.

They step out into the air, and Dream is glad he's invisible because he can't help the few tears that fall at the beautiful feeling of open area around him and fresh air in his lungs. He's grinning for a couple seconds, it all feels so nice. He could almost forget why he was here in the first place. He stops where he is, despite Sam and Sapnap pulling him forward. Letting his eyes fall closed, he turns his face to the sky, and lets the wind carry his hair behind him.

Sapnap and Sam stop after a moment as well, and he knows they understand what's going on. They don't stop him or rush him, and he's eternally grateful for that. He opens his eyes just slightly, and he wonders when the last time he'd seen something as blue as the sky. It glows a gentle indigo, it hums to him noises of reassurance and contentedness. Dream thinks he'd be happy to stare at it forever.

He understands why George likes blue so much now.

As soon as the brunette crosses his mind, he's looking straight ahead again. He starts forward, and Sam and Sapnap are walking with him in seconds. He lets them lead him, and looks around at the world, taking note of how things have changed while he's been away.

It all looks very similar to how he left it, nothing but the season's change really must've affected it, but he still feels some difference. Things feel lighter, the ground under his feet feels odd and the trees around them look stronger. Had things really been better off without him, or had he just never taken the time to appreciate anything before? He didn't know, but as he looks to the horizon, faint indents of stars begin to freckle the light purple sky, and sweet saccharine sentiment hums in his chest at their promise of a gentle summer night.

If he closed his eyes right now, he could pretend it was two years ago, and everything was alright.



The beach is getting closer, though. It feels more like it's approaching them than it does the other way around. The promise of worrying evidence is a train, and Dream might as well be tied to the tracks. It's unreal until it isn't, and suddenly the bloody sand is in view.

His breath stutters in his chest, and he can feel Sapnap turn to him, even though he's invisible. They move closer and closer and it becomes more clear; the dark stain on the sand shifts and spins as it's pulled and pushed by the tides. It'll be gone soon, if they get higher. Dream hopes they do.

"Over there," Sapnap says, and kicks some of the sand up to display which direction he's pointing to.

Sam pulls him left, and he has no choice but to follow. It's suddenly very apparent how vulnerable he is, and he shivers. This isn't the prison, the unyielding restraint of protection that that place offers is not here. This is somewhere he's never been, somewhere someone- *something, hopefully*- was brutalized and brought down. Dream has nothing to protect himself, and he's now very aware of it.

They've come to stand over a large rock sticking out of the water when the invisibility wears off. He looks to Sapnap, who looks back, and the worry must be evident on his face. Sapnap pauses, considering what to say, before looking away.

"Sapnap, you jump first," Sam says, moving to put his other hand on Dream's right side. His tone is slightly hurried, he wants to make sure no one sees them doing this.

Sapnap nods, and lets go of Dream. Dream immediately wishes he wouldn't have.

The shorter takes a couple steps and lowers himself to the ground. Dream realizes then that they're standing on top of a cave. His posture is improved in seconds, the fear of falling through the hollow stone looming over his head now.

Sapnap raises up on sturdy arms, and drops through the hole. Dream can hear his feet hit the ground, and feels some relief.

Sam nudges him forward. "Your turn, blondie."

Dream swallows hard at the words, but steps forward anyways. He lowers himself on to the



ground, just where Sapnap had been, and looks through the opening. Sapnap's feet are in view, and he knows the other would be encouraging him more if he thought it appropriate. Dream raises himself up, his conjoined hands curling in effort to stay put until he's ready to let go. He aims for an empty spot on the floor, screws his eyes shut, and lets himself drop.

When he opens his eyes again, he's on the floor. Right where he'd planned to be. He can feel the weight on the soles of his feet.

"Are you alright?"

Sapnap has a hand on his arm, he must have been standing there for over ten seconds.

"Yeah, I think so," he sighs out.

He nearly steps away, but Sapnap's faster. His hand drops to where Dream's clenched fist rests behind his back, and nudges him until he can slide their fingers together. He's discreet about it, but the small gesture is extremely comforting.

"It'll be okay," Sapnap promises.

Sam drops down beside them, and if he notices the two holding hands, he doesn't mention it. He just moves to stand on Dream's other side and motions for Sapnap to step over so that they can make it back to the portal.

It's only then that Dream realizes Sapnap had been blocking him from seeing something. Dark streaks of dried blood paint the floor, and he nearly gags at the sight. He'll try not to look down too much, then.

The walk is short, but it feels long. Dream doesn't know where they're going or what to expect, and that serves as a catalyst for his anxiety. At some point he begins to shake a bit, and Sapnap squeezes his hand. Was George really dragged through these hallways? Was he conscious? Was he already dead?

He feels his stomach turn at the thought.



“We’re here,” Sapnap whispers.

They’re both looking at him, and Dream wishes he had another invisibility potion. It’s hitting him that this could be the last time he sees Sapnap, that this could be the last time he sees this world in the first place. He hasn’t even apologized, he hasn’t even changed. He still had so much to prove. It hurts, and he’s scared.

“Dream.” The hand holding his tightens considerably. “Dream, look at me.”

Sapnap is pulling him forward by his shoulder, and when he turns to face him, he realizes his vision has become blurry. The warmth of his face registers, and he knows he’s crying.

Sapnap sighs, and pulls him closer, wrapping him up in a tight hug. Dream lets his face fall into the other’s shoulder, and does his best to hug back. His body shakes with heavy sobs, but Sapnap holds him up.

“I love you, you know?” Sapnap mumbles, aggressive but still affectionate.

Dream nods, and tries to reciprocate, but his voice won’t work.

“You better come back,” he pulls away, and looks his friend straight in the eyes. “Don’t you fucking die. Please, Dream.” His voice cracks at ‘please’, but he doesn’t care.

Dream nods, and Sapnap wipes his tears for him.

Dream knows he’s choosing his potential last words right now, and he’s careful to make them right. He coughs lightly, clearing his throat.

He won’t dampen this moment further with an apology.

“Thank you, Sapnap.”

It’s the best he can offer, and he knows Sapnap understands. It takes everything he has in him to let



their hands come apart.

Sam motions for him to stand on the edge of the portal then, and he takes a deep breath. He wishes his hands were uncuffed, this was going to be a rather reckless fall.

He's on the ledge now, and he's sure he'll be falling through in a few seconds. He looks to Sam, and briefly wonders if he'll just jump into the portal alone, if this was all some clever ruse to get rid of him for good.

But when he turns back to Sapnap, he trusts him.

"Are you ready?" Sam asks, sliding his bag behind his back.

Dream takes a quick breath. "Yeah," he exhales.

He and Sapnap share one last look, the air between them tense. He wishes he could fill all the space between them with conversation, moments where he'd proved he was better now, where he acted like a friend rather than a boss. He wishes he could take the last few months back, and redo them.

He's sure they both do. Sapnap smiles sadly, he must be thinking the same thing. They nod in comfortable understanding.

And Dream lets himself fall backwards.

-

The fall is quick and the landing has him on his back. Sam follows shortly after, managing to stay mostly upright. Dream pushes himself up and off the ground, which seems to be made of some pale off-white sand.

For a second, he waits for Sapnap to follow after them. He holds his breath, hoping his friend might just break the rules for him one more time.



It doesn't happen, though.

Sam brushes the sand off his clothes, and Dream takes a few moments to look around. The world they've fallen into is dimly lit, and he can see nothing but sand from all sides. There's light tracks to his side, and when he looks closer, there's blood there too. Not nearly as much as there was in the overworld, but still blood nonetheless. A faint glow beckons them in the direction of the tracks, and he knows that's the way they'll be going.

"What the hell..."

Dream turns to Sam, who's looking at the space above them, bewildered. He looks scared, and Dream follows his gaze to the empty sky.

It doesn't quite register at first, but after about twenty seconds of staring at the blank nothingness, it clicks. A hollowness fills him the moment he realizes.

The portal has disappeared behind them.

## Chapter End Notes

and there we go, another chapter out. i've been trying to make them longer for you guys :] i'm actually about to go to vegas, so i might not upload for a bit. (trying to prep the next chapter in advance but i might think of edits on the road.) also, if i made a tumblr would ya'll come over and say hi? i've been thinking about it and that sounds fun...wiggles eyebrows. as always, i hope everyone's doing well, thank you for reading !!



## Chapter Summary

it's The chapter.

## Chapter Notes

first of all, i would like to announce that i have broken a second google doc. second of all, i have a tumblr now. i'm spoomao3 on there if you wanna follow me, or just talk. i could use a beta reader, or just anyone to throw ideas at, if anyone's down.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

“Stay still, they’re a bit tricky,” Sam says, fingers looping under the cool handcuffs.

Dream stills as much as he can, and sighs in relief when he hears the loud click of the lock mechanism opening on one of the cuffs. He’s immediately pulling his arm in front of him, turning it around to flex his muscles and look for marks. There are slight indents where the obsidian dug into his skin, but they weren’t anything he couldn’t handle.

Another click resounds, and he’s completely free. Sam opens his bag, putting the cuffs away. He steps up to stand next to his prisoner.

“So. What now?”

Dream looks to the trail in the sand, lightly spattered with blood. He points to the glow on the horizon. “There.”

Sam follows his finger with his eyes, and hums in agreement. He reaches behind his back, gripping the handle of his sword. He pulls it up and out of its sheath. This will be his leverage over Dream.

A familiar quiet croak comes from behind them, and before they can turn around to find the source of the noise, an enderman has already teleported in front of them. Purple particles swarm around it, and it seems to shift back and forth for several moments, watching them. Sam raises his blade to kill it, but it’s gone before he can land the hit.



It teleports a few metres away, but doesn't stop looking at them. Dream has to fight not to look back.

Getting over it quickly, the two begin their trek into nowhere. Endermen continue to flash around them, and the spots of blood become more and more dispersed the further they walk. Dream hopes that means the source was healed, but he tries not to think too much into it.

Dream keeps catching Sam glancing over to him, and he can't help but feel slightly offended at the implications of his suspicion. As if he would do anything after putting all his trust into the warden. Hell, he has no idea where they are, does Sam really think he's that stupid? He scoffs lightly, and walks faster.

Building in the distance, a dark wall looms over them. The closer they get, the more vicious it seems. Light barely reflects off of it, it's so dark. Sam takes out his sword as they get closer, firmly gripping the handle, as if they were already fighting. Dream wasn't sure how far that was from the truth.

They seem to get smaller as they finally come upon the obsidian glacier, and Dream has to crane his neck back to see the top. He immediately recognizes the stone it's made from, he's been trapped in a box made of the stuff for months now. His eyes feel heavier just looking at it now.

"We don't have enough blocks to climb this thing," Sam says. Dream blinks, and realizes he's right. The wall is so tall that he can barely tell where it ends.

"Can you mine through?" he asks, motioning towards Sam's bag of tools.

Sam glances over to where Dream's standing, and his expression darkens slightly.

"Yeah...that seems like the best option," the warden says. Dream squints, confused at the change of demeanor.

"But," he starts again, "I'm not giving you a weapon." It's almost a scold, and Dream has to bite his tongue to keep from saying ' *Well, obviously* '.



Instead, he just nods. "I can stand back, if you want."

Sam seems to consider this for a moment before shaking his head. "I want you sitting."

Dream hates this, but he won't risk losing Sam's trust. "Okay," he sighs.

He takes a step back from the wall, and lets his knees fold underneath him. He plops down onto the sand, and looks up to Sam for approval.

The warden seems calmer, but still a bit wary. Dream nearly groans when he asks him to put his hands on the wall. Leaning forward, he presses his sweaty palms against the cool, black stone, and looks back to Sam, who nods, reaching behind him.

Sam wasn't sure before whether or not he trusted Dream, but as he watches the blonde do whatever he asks with little to no reluctance, he can't help but lean more towards the former. Maybe, just maybe, Dream has changed for the better. At least a little bit.

He retrieves his pickaxe from his bag, and watches Dream for any sign of sudden aggression. Finding none, he strikes the obsidian once, and checks again. Dream makes no move to interrupt or try to take from him, so he turns back and begins mining them an entryway.

It isn't difficult, he has a netherite pickaxe after all, but his arms do feel somewhat heavier at the question of what might be on the other side. It almost causes him to stall, but he's determined to get through this quickly. When he breaks through to the other side, he grins. A tiny sliver of light leaks out of the newly-formed opening, and illuminates their space slightly. He catches Dream move in his peripheral, and shoots him a look.

Dream turns the other way immediately, and Sam feels slight remorse tug down at his lips. He didn't mean to be harsh.

The wall splinters and cracks some more, shards of obsidian falling like broken glass, sending a chorus of twinkling noises through the air. The broken stone almost looks mesmerizing, it's covered in smooth grooves and reflects barely enough light to look alive.

Finally, enough falls away for the hole to be considered a door, and Sam turns to Dream. The former prisoner is staring at the stone between his hands with bored eyes, and Sam frowns at the



realization that this must not be too out of the ordinary for him. Is this what Dream was doing all that time when nobody was visiting him? He cringes at the idea, suddenly the prison feels a bit less humane.

“Come on,” he says, sliding his pickaxe back into his bag.

Dream turns to him hesitantly, but immediately stands when he sees the netherrite tool disappear back into Sam’s bag. He steps closer, trying to see through the opening to the other side. Not much is visible, but he thinks he sees fire burning somewhere in the distance.

They take their time stepping through the door, though Dream is seemingly getting more nervous because of it. Sam knows he wants to hurry, but safety is still his first priority.

They get through to the other side eventually, and the sight sends Sam reeling. He instinctively reaches behind his back to grab a weapon, whatever’s happened here couldn’t have been done by anything less than dangerous.

Before them stands what looks to be the remains of a castle-like structure, similar to Eret’s, though much more foreboding. The sand near the bottom of the structure is scorched, completely blackened and melted. Speckles of color paint the ground, blues and reds and oranges reflect all around them, and Dream realizes they’re all pieces of glass, presumably spilled from the tall, broken windows tracing up the walls of the building. Trails of blackened sand lead out the front door of the construction, and Dream figures that’s where they’ll find what they’re looking for. His heart sinks, everything around them suggests something horrible.

“Holy shit,” Sam mutters from behind him.

Dream hums in agreement, not trusting his voice. He can’t stand still, but every step closer to the entrance of the mansion is making him more anxious, and he knows he’ll most definitely be sick by the time he steps through the door.

Against his better judgement, he tries to run. Figuring he can beat the nausea, he takes quick heavy steps towards the door, and tries not to inhale too much when he starts to smell smoke. Sam trails after him, still wide-eyed at the scene before them. He’s holding his sword now, if Dream chooses to run off he’ll have to be ready to fend for himself.

The doors are wide open for them to step through, but upon entering, the scent of smoke is so



heavy it sends Dream into a coughing fit. He turns to find the source, and sees the corner of the room, right where a spiral staircase ends, is blackened from flames. What looks to have been a chandelier is splayed out on the ground like a dead spider, its glass pieces scattered around it like diamonds in coal. The fire seems to have gone out a while ago, but the wooden floor still glows with the embers of it.

“Are you okay?” Sam is standing behind him now, covering his nose and mouth with his sleeve.

Dream coughs again, and nods weakly. Sam steps closer to him, and pats his back so lightly he might as well have not touched him at all.

“Do you think,” the warden starts, his eyes tracing up the staircase, “that that’ll hold us?”

Dream follows his gaze, and finds he can’t confidently answer that question. About halfway up the wall, something catches his eye.

There’s a painting hanging just above the first floor. A pale boy with a familiar face is standing in front of an all-to-familiar prison.

There’s a painting of George in this house.

As he glances around, there’s more than just a painting. The whole place is covered in him, from paintings to carvings to belongings Dream hadn’t seen in forever-

It was all him.

Sam hadn’t seemed to notice yet, of course he wouldn’t. He would probably have told Dream to be as quiet as possible if he had, because obviously whoever had made this could still be here. Dream didn’t care, all caution was thrown to the wind. He opened his mouth, gathered his voice in his chest, and yelled as loud as he could.

“George?!”

The warden next to him jumped at the sudden noise, and Dream lunged towards the staircase, no longer worried about it’s stability. He put all of his weight into his steps, recklessly making it to the second floor. He continues to yell for George, but no response comes, only increasing his



eagerness to find the boy.

“Oh, fuck it,” Sam hisses, and follows. He’ll check the third floor, he decides.

Dream tears through empty rooms, painted with blues and yellows and greens. They’re all perfectly put together, though glass litters their floors, small colored shards sticking out of the soft carpet. He checks behind every door, looks for a closet in each room, and even checks under a couple beds before deciding that he was potentially wasting time.

He rushes upstairs to the next floor, and makes quick eye contact with Sam, who shakes his head. *Not here.*

They both make their way up the next set of stairs, and Dream can feel it the moment he steps onto the fourth floor. Something is weighing him down tremendously, and his throat feels so tight, he can barely breathe. He can’t yell for George again, though he doubts the response would change. He turns left, then turns right, and it’s like something is pulling him forward, down the hall, where an unlit bedroom has its door slightly cracked open.

He drags himself towards it, and he can almost feel his bones get heavier. The door pushes open easier than he hopes it would, as if this is all nothing, it feels effortless. He can see a large open space leading out to a balcony from the doorway; there was probably a window there at some point, he guesses. He takes a step into the bedroom, and somehow the sound of glass cracking and shattering under his feet makes it past the pounding in his ears.

But everything falls to background noise around him as he takes another step forward, far enough into the room to look to his right and see the rest of the room. His breath hitches when he sees it.

Splayed out on the bed, looking like a rag doll tossed to the side, is George.

## Chapter End Notes

side note, i had a really creepy dream abt this fic in vegas and thought it was real for about an hour after i woke up, which was terrifying. i think it had something to do with these damn cactus gummies i picked up in arizona. weird shit man.



anyways, thanks for reading. hope you're all doing well.



# XXI

## Chapter Summary

you already know what it isssss

warning - george suffers a lot in this chapter.

## Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

It's like the world has dissipated to static around him, his mind scrambling to scream *it's him, he's there, he isn't moving, he isn't brea-*

Dream knows immediately, by the way George's skin almost matches the blank white of the bedsheets, by the way he hasn't breathed in over ten seconds now, by the way he hasn't woken up yet.

He's standing over the boy in a second, too scared to get closer, watching for any sign of life. There's no way...

"George?" The name comes out as a whimper, and Dream feels the air leave his lungs.

Dream carefully moves to place his hand against George's cheek, and the unforgiving cold makes him jerk away in shock. His throat swells with the words he would use to wake his friend up if he still had any hope, but all that makes it out is a loud, shuddering sob.

The boy's face is fixed on a dull, resting expression. He doesn't look calm, he doesn't look happy. He just looks dead. His eyes are shut, the skin around them just slightly crinkled, as if he'd been forcing them closed, waiting hopelessly for his heart to finally stop. Dream wonders how long he'd been lying here, knowing things were ending. Obviously not quick enough to feel nothing, there's blood on his lips and in his hair, streaking angrily down the side of his head. Dream tries not to touch near it; he's being as gentle as possible, still wary of George's comfort.

He lets himself fall down to the mattress, draping himself over the lifeless body as if he could bring it warmth once again, as if he could slowly seep life back into it. George doesn't move, though. It suddenly hits him that George isn't even *here*. He's finally next to his closest friend again, and yet he is still absent in some awful, permanent way.



He shuts his eyes and a thousand memories are waiting for him, maybe more. Every time he'd seen George jump in excitement, every time he'd wished him a happy birthday, every time he'd let him sleep over when he got too tired to walk home, it was all rushing past him now. It stings like a hot knife on his heart, and then he remembers the last time he had spoken to George, cold and careless, and it intensifies tenfold.

His hands find George's sides and hold on tight, he isn't ready to let go, and he doesn't think he ever will be. He tries to ignore the way his fingers begin to get stiff from the cold of George's skin.

At some point Sam must've arrived behind him, because a hand finds its place on his back, some futile attempt at comfort that feels almost like mockery. He doesn't know when he started screaming, but after a while his throat starts to burn, and his blurred vision is fading at the edges. He loops his arms around George's back to pull him closer, confused and distressed when he feels two arm-like structures protruding from his body. He carefully lifts him closer, peering around his shoulder to see the two new limbs, and his mind dissolves into a million questions.

Tracing the spots where the new skin connects to George's back, he screws his eyes shut, and cries. In his head, his thoughts scream the same phrase on repeat: *What happened to you?*

-

It takes Dream close to an hour to get calmed down, for the dread to sink and settle into him like sand into an hourglass. Sam is there when he becomes lucid again, trying to coax him away from the corpse underneath him. He's saying things Dream doesn't want to hear, but the taller lets himself be pulled away nonetheless. The warden wipes at his face gently, just on his cheeks, avoiding the reddened area of his under eye.

Dream's vision slowly begins to return at that, and he stares blankly out the window. Was this the last thing George had seen? He hopes it had been prettier than this, when George had still been here.

He looks to Sam, and it's clear what's on his mind. His expression is waiting, expectant of something. And Dream knows what immediately.

In response, he looks down at his hands. He could do this, he could definitely do this. It would surely kill him, but he could.



He could revive George.

If Sam witnessed it, it would be over for him. The secret would be out. He would no longer be necessary, he would lose the one tiny sliver of divinity he'd gained, and he'd be mortal again. But...he could. And he wanted to. Sam surely knew that.

He clenched his fists and watched his knuckles turn white, thinking back to every bad decision he'd made, everything that had made him so dependent on this little piece of knowledge. In some way, didn't he deserve this? Maybe existing in the same world as George was too much to ask for, maybe this was all some divine punishment for his carelessness. He'd squandered the time he had, and now it was all gone.

For him. It was all gone for him. But it didn't have to be for George.

He shut his eyes, grit his teeth, and there it was. The decision was made.

Dream drops it all right there, lets his divinity go without a moment more of hesitation, and feels no regret when it leaves him.

-

Somewhere, where souls mingle outside of the visible world, Dream and George were about to cross paths for the first time in a long time. What had formerly been a close-knit friendship had now become a meteor passing through the sky one last time before it finally, finally, burns out.

One had accepted it, while the other was still unaware. Maybe if George knew, there might have been plans made. A watch party, of sorts. He may have had time to set up a telescope. Who knows?

But he didn't, and so when he suddenly found himself extremely awake and horrifyingly cold, his first thought was: *Is this hell?*



Uncomfortably hot hands held his face and pressed into his palms, and he would scream if it was an option. His vocal chords seemed to be frozen. Like most of the rest of his body, they weren't awake yet.

"Come on George, get up," a voice says.

He can hear it perfectly clearly, and it shocks him into full awareness. He's not dead right now, something is wrong.

"Please."

*Dream? Wait-*

His memory jogs, and cold fear rushes over him. Fuck, DreamXD. Before he can think of a reply, a hand presses down hard on his chest, and he feels his own heartbeat reply with a heavy pulse through him. It's horrible and uncomfortable and overwhelming, and it takes everything out of him in an instant. He can't see, can't breathe, can't *think*.

The fear gives him the strength to pull his own eyes open, and too-bright light blinds him. He suddenly has a full-blown headache, this couldn't be worse.

But it could, because as he sits as a passenger in his own regenerating body, his wings start to grow in. They grow longer than they had before, and George can feel his bones hollow out and stretch behind him. Thin, wax covered feathers push out from the skin around them, and extend down until he can feel them on his sides, right above his hips. It feels like torture, and somewhere behind the buzz that has filled his thoughts, he suspects it might be.

"Wh- Oh, *shit*," Dream's voice can be heard from above him, and those too-warm hands drift down to rest on the base of his throbbing wings. Tears well up in his eyes from the blistering touch, and suddenly it happens. His lungs pull up from where they've sunk down, and he sucks in a huge, heaving breath. The air feels sharp, and stings him from the inside out.

A broken whimper escapes him, and now the sunspots are beginning to clear. The hold on his wings loosens, and he hears someone sigh from above him. It almost sounds confused, yet somewhat relieved, which confuses him slightly. When the first bit of ceiling becomes clear, he realizes he's right back where he was when he died. The glass window is now shattered, and the room is much colder, but he's definitely in the same place.



“Is he...?” a new voice, slightly deeper, asks.

George is beyond confused now, and lets out a mixture of a hum and a sob. One of the hands comes up from behind him and gently cups around his neck. George tries to steady himself in fear of being choked, but his body is now wracked with harsh shivers, desperately trying to warm itself back up. He slams his eyes back closed, fearing the pain to come.

“He has a pulse,” Dream’s voice says from above him. “George, can you hear me?”

It all feels like too much, the cold, the heat, everything suddenly moving around inside him, the literal *new bones* splaying out under him, the muscles and skin twisting and rearranging to accommodate for them. Something lifts his head from where it’s lying limply against smooth sheets, and he finds his voice. George screams, pushing all the air he’d just let in up and out of his chest.

Warm fingers tangle in his hair and he’s hoisted up into a sitting position, screaming at the pain of the movement. His wings pull on the skin of his back, and the hand that’s still resting on one of them gently adjusts to slip underneath them. The heavy things are lifted, held up for him. He can’t hear what’s being said, but someone is talking in a rushed tone, and he can barely make out quiet and panicked words of reassurance slipping out in between some of the sentences.

He opens his eyes again and finds himself settling on the blurred figure of someone staring back at him, their face twisted into an expression of extreme worry and fear. Long dark blonde hair frames their face in messy waves, and they’re almost as pale as him.

“You’re okay, breathe. Please breathe, please,” they say, stumbling over their words in a rush to get them out into the air.

It takes a couple seconds for the words to sink in, and George tries to take the advice, finally focusing on gasping for air. The buzz in his head has subsided, and now he’s just listening to air rush through his raw throat and the words of whoever has him held up.

Eventually, he lets himself slump over, collapsing onto the owner of the too-warm hands, his head buried behind their shoulder. He hopes he doesn’t anger them when he relaxes into the hold, leaving them to support his heavy wings.



His senses are slowly returning, his vision has cleared up much more, the strange numbness coating his body has dissipated, and his mouth tastes like dust. Soon, he's able to move back to breathing from his nose, a much more favorable option considering how sore his throat is. The hand behind his head pats his back every few seconds, and he coughs a bit, just enough to get the dust out of his lungs.

A familiar smell becomes more and more apparent, and the longer he sits there, taking deep breaths, the more clear it is that it's coming from the person he's draped over.

Carefully, he brings his arms up to grasp at the nice-smelling person, and hooks his fingers in the material of their shirt.

"Sam, help me take this off."

George stirs slightly at the sound of Dream's voice. Though he'd love to believe it was true, that this was actually him, he couldn't. He knew DreamXD could manipulate his voice, this was nothing for the god. He could easily be pulling the strings here.

"Put your hand under this...Yeah, that works."

George flinches as the arm holding up his wings slides out from under them, and is quickly replaced by a new one. The hand on his back also retreats, and soon he can hear the sound of buttons being undone. He looks up, watching his human support beam shift and slide one sleeve of the button-up off, before turning to where George is laying his head.

"Just a second," the other mutters, once again pressing his palm to George's chest, holding him upright as he backs away slightly to shift the other sleeve off. George lets go, allowing the material to fall from his grip.

"Should be big enough," the blonde pushes him back a bit, forcing George to lift himself from his shoulder. "We'll just put it on backwards."

George closes his eyes as he feels the warm fabric slide over his arm, pushing up and over his shoulder. He looks up to watch the blonde push up the other sleeve, and squints at the familiarity of his face.



Dream is too focused to notice that George has just recognized him, and bites his lip when he sees him jump slightly, looking up in concern.

George's breath shudders. This isn't the image of Dream that DreamXD typically used to fool him into false security. This is different, clearer. George has never seen Dream look so disheveled, and somehow it made this feel all the more realistic.

"Are you okay?"

George sees it then, the pattern of freckles he'd been company to for almost his entire life, the small specks of darker blue along the edges of dark green eyes, the small scar from when Sapnap had set off a firework a little too close to Dream's hammock and coincidentally burned a spot on the older boy's cheek. Every precious detail he hadn't quite been able to remember for himself was suddenly there, and he knew this wasn't fake.

"...Sam, can you do up those buttons?"

Dream reaches up to George's hair, quietly shocked at how long it had gotten. It seemed to have been cut weirdly, too.

"Done," came the other voice, and George suddenly very aware that there was someone he doesn't know behind him, holding up his wings. He tries to turn back and see the person, but the soreness thrumming through his entire body is enough to discourage him from moving that much.

He looks to Dream instead, who is finally, *finally* looking back. For a while, they just stay there, staring at each other.

George takes a deeper breath, and carefully forces out his question. "Did he get you, too?"

It seems obvious what must've happened. DreamXD had brought Dream here as well, to torture him further. Dread and hopelessness and relief swirl in his stomach, he can't help feeling grateful that he's no longer alone. His relief is slightly offput at the thought that DreamXD has taken another victim, and that he's to blame for it, though.

Dream's face changes at his words, confusion and concern lacing into the creases around his eyes. He shakes his head slightly. "No...Who is 'he', George?"



No silence has ever held more explanation, as George's face changes from confusion, to surprise, to fear, and finally collapses. Tears that shouldn't be as warm as they are make their way down George's face, and Dream surges forward to hold him again. His arms are around the other boy's torso in a moment, and George returns the gesture, clutching weakly at the white fabric of Dream's undershirt.

"It's okay, it's okay. Let's just focus on getting out of here. There's no one else here, trust me," Dream assures, making sure not to disturb Sam, who's looking down at them with an expression somewhere between empathetic and conflicted.

His hand had been on his sword the entire resurrection process, and Dream was almost positive he would have killed him by now. But when George came back, and Sam had watched Dream scramble to help him, he couldn't bring himself to do the job. After watching all of this unfold, he's not sure he ever would.

He brings himself to speak quietly, trying not to let George hear. "We should really get going, just in case."

George hears anyway. "I- I know a way out," he coughs, throat trying to close around his words. "I got out before, there's a portal."

Sam and Dream share a look, the same question on their minds: Was it a new portal, or the one they had seen disappear?

Did it matter? They were clueless, after all.

Dream clicks his tongue, breaks eye contact, and nods.

"Okay, worth a try. Let's go."



btw if you don't know what pin feathers are, they're basically waxed feathers that pop up when a bird molts, and they don't get fluffy until the wax falls or is picked off.  
thank you all for the support yesterday, it made me really happy to come back and read all your encouragement. i really hope you all like where we end up.



## XXII

### Chapter Summary

woo woo home time. unless.

### Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

George is still shivering slightly when Sam begins to let go of his wings. He has to grit his teeth to keep from whining at the pain, but somehow he bears it. Dream's hand doesn't leave his shoulder for a second as he attempts to stand, a constant support that he couldn't be more grateful for.

But, after his fifth time falling back down to the mattress, Dream offers to carry him. George isn't sure about it, but the blonde promises to be as careful as humanly possible, and not jostle him too much. George doesn't see any other options, so he reluctantly lets himself fall limp as Dream curves his arms under him. The feeling sends an upsetting wave of déjà vu over him, and he shudders slightly.

Dream looks down to him, carefully adjusting his hold in hopes to make George more comfortable. "Is this alright?"

George looks up and nods, his hair falling into his eyes slightly.

"It's alright," he says quietly.

His wings fall awkwardly beneath him, and he worries they'll get stepped on. They don't. Dream stays true to his promise, and George stays untouched throughout their journey back down the stairs. When they get outside the mansion, George lets his head fall back against Dream's chest, relishing in the warmth.

"How'd you get over the wall?" he mumbles, scanning the visible wall for a ladder.

"Homemade door," Dream replies, pointing to a hole in the dark stone that George had considered a death sentence.



George looks to the makeshift entrance and smiles, amused. Freedom had never looked so botched.

They make their way outside the wall, and Sam turns back to look at them.

“Which way?”

George thinks back a bit, and realizes he has no clue which way they’re facing. “Can you get me up there? I might be able to see it from there.” He points to a hill.

Sam looks to Dream, nods, and turns to start making his way up the hill.

Dream gathers George up and pulls him closer to his chest, further off the ground.

“Sorry, just don’t wanna risk anything,” he explains.

George hums, understanding.

They make their way up the hill with careful steps and several check-ins that are appreciated but unnecessary. Dream is unbearably gentle, and George has forgotten the warmth of kindness. He could almost sob from relief at the way Dream tapped his fingers against his leg, or the reassuring smiles he’d shoot at George when it was obvious he was struggling to carry him. It felt so painfully sweet, and he was so scared it was going to be taken away.

He twists his hands in his lap at the thought. They had gained back full feeling, though they were still cold. Experimentally, he presses his palm to his own tear-warmed cheek, and lets his eyes close at the calming feeling.

His friend looks down, curious. “You alright?” he whispers, just under his breath. George doesn’t open his eyes, only nodding in response.

They eventually make it to the top, and Sam prompts him to open his eyes.

Dream spun in a circle, letting George look around. The brunette lifts a hand and points. “There.”



They both look towards the area George is pointing in, and Sam has to squint to see what he's talking about. Dream can barely make out what George is seeing, but after a minute, he can just barely see a black smudge on the off-white sand.

They make a mental note of the direction they need to be going, and start on their way.

George stares blankly at the sky as they go, and the way he suddenly seems so distant makes Dream worry. He wonders how long George has been here, and what he's experienced during that time. He wasn't going to point out the obvious right now, but last time he'd seen his friend, he'd been significantly less winged.

He leans down just a bit, and whispers, "You can sleep, if you need to. I'll wake you when we get there."

George looks up to him at that, and firmly shakes his head. "No, I'm not sleeping."

He almost sounds upset.

"It's okay if you do, though," Dream confirms, making sure to leave the option open.

"I won't." The words are insistent.

Dream takes the hint, and nods.

The rest of the walk goes as smoothly as a miles long walk can go. Sam reluctantly gives Dream a strength potion to carry George easier, also drinking one himself, just in case. George sinks back down into his quiet, distant state. Dream guesses that's fair, he did just die and come back, after all. But when they get close enough to make out the shape of the portal and the stones surrounding it, Dream's stomach lurches.

It's a feeling like being too far underwater. Nothing seems wrong until your lungs are burning and there's still a few metres to go. It's suddenly all hitting him, when he makes it to the other side, Sam will kill him. Or someone will, because he's not necessary anymore. Not when Sam can revive people now.



He hasn't even told George goodbye. Fuck, he hasn't even really said much of a hello.

His heart sinks in his chest, but he doesn't regret his decision. He holds George tighter, and suddenly the familiar pool of stars is close enough to run to.

"That's it," George says. When Dream looks down, the boy in his arms is smiling, a few stray tears threatening to fall.

Sam jogs ahead a bit, and looks down. "Okay, looks good!" he yells to them.

Dream would be running if he didn't know better.

They all make their way over to the portal, and Sam motions for them to stand on the edge. "We'll jump together, okay?"

Dream rolls his eyes a bit, but nods. He pulls George closer, and checks to make sure he'll fall through okay. George is just short enough to fit, and Dream is eternally grateful.

"Right then," Sam starts, implying he was about to jump. George leans back against Dream, trying not to throw off their balance. "Now."

They both step forward, and Sam disappears into the dark. Dream closes his eyes, waiting for the fall. He thinks of George's future, and wishes him the best. He knows he won't have the strength to say goodbye when the time comes, so gives it to George mentally, letting a small scene play out in his mind. It's not the best goodbye, but it's something. Maybe, eventually, Sam might bring him back and give George a proper one.

Satisfied, he waits for his feet to touch the ground.

They never do.



## Chapter End Notes

couldn't fit bc of his massive dumpy :(

ALSO !! big thank you to dylanapollo for being the reason i can now delete the "no beta we just die" tag :))



## XXIII

### Chapter Summary

relax, it'll be fine.

cw for dehumanizing language

### Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

When he looks down, they're hovering over the portal, and George is gripping at his shirt with enough force to tear it, shivering slightly. Something suddenly feels inherently wrong, and Dream can't place what, aside from the obvious.

"Well," comes an echoed voice, "that was stupid of you."

This only serves to make George shake harder.

Dream turns, looking for the speaker. "What-"

He stops. A considerably large deity is standing behind them. It's immediately obvious they're standing in the midst of something powerful, Dream can feel innate fear seeping through him like poison. He doesn't know what or who he's looking at, but he doesn't like it.

DreamXD gestures to Dream. "Come on, turn around," he says, in the most entitled voice Dream has ever had the misfortune of hearing.

"Who do y-" Dream has to stop, because he's suddenly spinning towards the entity, completely unable to stop himself. George gasps, and grips onto his friend's shirt, not daring to look up.

"Oh, why is it moving?" DreamXD asks, genuine curiosity painting his features.

Dream looks down to George, who has curled in on himself. "Wh- Because he's alive?"



Oh.

Dream looks back up, not to some random entity, but to the one responsible for George's death.

He immediately grips his friend tighter, in an attempt to shield him from whatever this thing was.

"Oh don't worry," the god assures. "I don't want to take it from you."

George moves quickly to wrap his arms around Dream's torso, and Dream really hopes the strength potion hasn't worn off.

"I don't know how you did this," DreamXD sighs, gesturing at the very much alive George. "Or why."

He moves closer to them, reaching out to lightly place a hand on George. Dream tries to jerk away, but is unsuccessful. George jumps, and Dream can tell something horrible has been done to him.

"Oh, that's new."

The thing is looking down to George's wings.

"If you don't want him, leave us alone," Dream snaps.

The thing looks back up to him, and dangerous silence permeates the air.

"I'm trying to tell you," the thing reaches up, and a golden hand finds its way onto Dream's neck, "that it's broken. Don't waste your time, you're smarter than that."

It's hand falls from his neck, and falls to his shoulder.



Dream scowls. “Let go of me.”

The god sighs, and pulls back.

Dream opens his mouth to speak again, but before he can, stars are falling around them. They’re on their way home.

-

The fall is quick, and George is tucked into his chest for the most of it, only pulling away when he feels the thud of Dream suddenly being back on solid ground. Sam is staring at them with enough anger to take out a small child.

“Where were you two?”

Dream swallows, hard. He instinctively pulls George closer. “Sorry, we got-”

George moves to look up at Sam. He doesn’t say anything, but Sam’s face softens. He looks up to Dream, questioning. Dream shrugs slightly.

Sam gives in. “Okay, then.”

He turns around, and begins to walk out. Dream is surprised at his calmness, but follows without question. George makes a move to get out of his arms, but regrets it the moment he’s no longer against Dream, and pulls himself back.

Dream almost laughs at that.

As they walk, Dream can’t help but notice the blood has been cleaned. The hallways are significantly less mossy, and the torches seem to be new, recently replaced. He wonders how long they had been gone.

George shuts his eyes as he remembers the hallways. He never wants to walk down one of them



again, he hates this so much. He can't help but feel he can barely see places where his own blood had been smeared over the floor, though he wasn't sure if he was actually seeing things or not.

When they arrive at the cave, Sam is standing at the entrance of what looks to be a tunnel. Sapnap made an easier way out, then. Dream sighed in relief, he really hadn't thought of how he would get George through a sky opening, or (god forbid) an underwater tunnel.

As they made their way up and out of the cave, George in a backwards button up, Dream significantly less powerful, the overworld seemed to be welcoming them back. George was perked up, watching as the light got closer. Dream could even swear he was smiling.

Suddenly, a face pokes out from beside the opening of the tunnel. Sapnap.

His eyes brighten immediately, though brief worry passes over his features when he sees George.

"Dream?" he yells, his question clear in his voice.

Dream smiles and calls back, "He's okay, we're all here!!"

It's the best sentence he's ever said, he decides.

He quickens his pace a bit, rushing Sam slightly as they finally greet the sun, making their last steps out of the tunnel. George squints at the new lights, and he isn't alone.

Sapnap is on them in a second, hugging around Dream's neck, and bending to get closer to George. Suddenly, Dream has an idea.

He pushes George forward, gesturing at Sapnap to replace his arms where they hold the older up.

"What?" Sapnap looks confused.

"He's cold, you're hot. Take him."



Sapnap smiles at being called hot, and Dream once again pushes George out for him to take. George rolls his eyes at being talked about like he isn't there, but can't help but be happy as Sapnap wraps his arms under him, stuttering when he notices George's new limbs.

"Oh yeah, careful around the w-," Dream leans down, "They are wings, right?"

George recoils a bit at the reality of the situation- he has wings now, they're real- and nods.

Sapnap looks confused, but doesn't push. He lifts George to his chest, and begins to fulfill his new job as a human heater.

Dream lets his arms fall to his side and watches the two. It's the first time they've all been together in who-knows-how long. It would be a lie to say he didn't cry a little bit.

He turns to look for Sam, who he finds is a ways behind them, speaking to Phil. They're chatting like friends, but Dream can't remember them ever having communicated much before. He can just barely overhear their conversation.

"You built us a tunnel," Sam says, voice laced with gratitude.

"Yeah, we had time," Phil replies, just before he glances over and Dream has to snap his head around to keep from being caught eavesdropping.

Phil definitely saw, though. He doesn't turn back around out of shame, but he keeps listening to the conversation.

"Uh, hmm. Well," Phil says, obviously waiting to see if Dream will turn around and join their conversation. He doesn't. "I didn't know George was..."

He trails off, but it's clear what he means. Even without looking, Dream can tell he's gesturing to the wings. Phil is the oldest avian on the server, only challenged by Quackity, who was barely ever seen flying. George had never shown any signs of having wings, and it wasn't every day someone just suddenly appeared with new limbs.



“Yeah...I don’t know,” Sam replies. “Something happened, I think.”

“Did-”

Dream doesn’t hear what Phil says, because all of a sudden Sapnap’s hand is on his shoulder, and he’s being led to the side.

“Listen, I talked with Phil, I think you can stay out of the prison for another night,” he’s saying, but Dream only catches the last bit. He looks down, and Sapnap’s arms are empty.

“Where’s George?” he asks, sounding a little more aggressive than he’d intended.

“Ge- He’s over there,” Sapnap says, pointing behind them, where George is basking in the slowly fading sunlight. Even in his deteriorated state, he looks so alive. Maybe it’s because Dream has recently seen him dead, or maybe that’s just how George is. His wings splay out underneath him, his arms are raised above his head, and Dream is now suddenly very aware of the greasy, tangled mess that is George’s hair. He’d have to wash soon, then.

“He asked to be put down for a bit, I think he was getting sore,” Sapnap explains, watching the oldest twist and a bit of grass in between his fingers. “Also, why is he wearing your shirt?”

Dream looks up to his friend again, and blinks. “Sapnap, he has fucking wings now,” he whisper-shouts, “and *that’s* the question you ask?”

Sapnap lets out a small huff of a laugh. “I asked him about that,” he starts.

Dream’s jaw drops. He can’t believe the audacity.

“He didn’t seem to have an answer. Do you?”

Dream fixes his face, and sighs. “I have no fucking clue. They were there, and then they just grew more when-” He stops himself, not sure whether Sapnap is ready to hear about what’s happened.



“When what?” the shorter asks, suddenly looking slightly suspicious.

Dream looks to George to make sure he isn’t listening, and then turns back to Sapnap.

“He was, uhm,” his voice cracks a bit, but he pulls it back together. “When we found him, George was dead.” Sapnap takes a sharp breath. “I revived him,” Dream finishes.

Sapnap’s mouth is opening and closing like a fish, he can’t even begin to wrap his head around that.

“I don’t even think he knows what happened,” Dream rushes to say.

Sapnap finds his voice. “Did Sam see you?”

Dream nods.

“Oh- Oh my god, does he know how to...?”

Dream nods again, and can’t help but flick his eyes away to keep from holding Sapnap’s gaze. They both know the weight of the situation, but Dream isn’t ready to accept that he’s on limited time. His eyes sting a bit at the situation, he hopes Sapnap doesn’t see.

“Dream,” his friend says, looking past him to get a glance at Sam. “What did he say?”

Dream looks down. “Nothing. I don’t know what’s going to happen.”

He can practically hear the wheels turning in Sapnap’s head, and hesitantly waits for him to speak again. He doesn’t know what he expects him to say, maybe something about being irrational, maybe some word of understanding, maybe a goodbye.

He doesn’t expect to be hugged. But Sapnap pulls him in, like he has so many times throughout



their lives, and rests his head on his shoulder. He's careful to put his arms under Dream's so that the taller can return the gesture or pull away if he becomes uncomfortable. Dream doesn't make any move to do so, so Sapnap holds tighter.

"It'll be okay." He says the words with complete confidence, and Dream doesn't know which one of them he's trying to convince. "I won't let him kill you."

Dream isn't sure he believes that, but the words are enough to make his tears fall from their seats in his eyes, and he wraps himself around Sapnap, a quiet way of saying 'thank you'.

It's not a long hug, they don't want to make a scene. But it's long enough for Dream to understand he's not wanted dead, and that he won't be if his friends have anything to say about it.

Gradually, they move over to where George is lying, and plant themselves on the ground next to him. They have to avoid sitting on his wings, but manage to still be close enough to be comfortable. Small bits of grass are scattered on the sand from where George has plucked them from the ground. The color has returned to him somewhat, he at least looks like he has a pulse now. Dream is happy at the change, and it's all he can do to keep himself from reaching over and grabbing George's hand.

Sapnap is looking at the brunette with a newfound wonder; after all, George had just come back from the dead. It wasn't a scientific interest, nor was it disgusted or pitious. He just looked slightly surprised, and grateful. Dream was thankful for that, he's sure George would be too.

"The sun is so nice," George mumbles, just loud enough for them to hear.

Dream hums in agreement. He realizes then, that George may have been denied the sun as long as he was. Maybe longer. He turns to watch the other, whose eyes are barely open just enough to look awake. George has a new piece of grass in his hands, and is carefully ripping it into smaller and smaller strips. He finally tosses them up into the air like confetti, smiling as their silhouettes fall to the ground, illuminated by the now setting sun.

"Hey-" Sapnap sits up, his hands reaching to his mouth. He spits out a piece of grass, and George laughs.

Sapnap frowns at his amusement, and snatches up a handful of sand, pouring it directly on to George's chest. George just rolls his eyes and goes slack against the ground, unbothered.



“Sapnap, you’re getting my shirt dirty,” Dream whines from beside them. He doesn’t make a move to stop Sapnap though, too tired to actually care.

He looks to where Sam is still chatting with Phil, and lets his eyes drift shut. The distant noise of the waves combined with Sapnap and George’s company is enough to begin dragging him asleep. They’re all together again, his friends are safe, they’re all outside and warm. He couldn’t be happier.

Dream doesn’t care what happens in the morning, he lets himself fall asleep there, knowing he’s done what he needs to do.

About a meter away, Sapnap isn’t far behind. He watches George tear and rip up pieces of grass, until eventually he shuts his eyes as well. His voice is far back in his throat when he speaks.

“Are you okay, George?”

He doesn’t open his eyes, he just lies there and waits for a reply. A minute of silence slips by, and then another. He can hear that George has stilled beside him, and he wonders if the brunette is watching him, if he should open his eyes and look back.

When George’s reply comes, it’s quiet and slightly unsure.

“I will be.”

Sapnap hums, and cracks his eyes open just slightly to glimpse over. George is staring at the sky, one hand draped over his chest, the other at his side. He looks okay, at least physically. He looks *safe* .

Dream is already asleep beside him, chest rising and falling normally. Sand has gotten into his hair, and he’s sure he’ll hear about it when they all get up. He looks to Sam, who’d obviously had many chances to kill Dream without him there, and decides they’re all safe.

Content with this, the youngest of the three shuts his eyes, and passes out.



George is the only one who stays up, watching the blue tinted sky turn to grey, and then to black.  
*The stars haven't looked so real in ages* , he thinks.

The sky is putting on a show, just for him. He smiles.

#### Chapter End Notes

so, that should be the last time we see dreamxd. unless i write a sequel. that bitch  
wants nothing to do with humans anymore, god bless.  
healing arc has begun.



## XXIV

### Chapter Summary

listen. the path to happiness is bumpy. don't yell at me.

### Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

George is shaking him awake when he comes too, the brunette's lithe hands clutching at his side like a bird's talons. His wings are still flopping down against his back, and Dream wants to laugh at the sound, but something feels wrong. It's not quite light, why is George waking him?

He sits up, and the reason is clear.

Sam stands before them, watching as George wakes him. Sapnap is halfway off the ground, still kneeling, rubbing at his eyes. Phil can be heard from behind them, saying something about "ankle weights", and Dream loosely recognizes that something important is happening.

"Dream," Sam says, "Get up, you're going back to prison."

The words hit him like a bucket of ice water, and he flinches back. He looks to George, who blinks in confusion, and then to Sapnap, who's suddenly standing, looking at Sam with anger folded into the creases around his eyes.

"Why does he have to go back?" George asks, also beginning to get upset.

"Because he's dangerous," Phil replies from behind them, voice softened from exhaustion.

Sapnap and George are voicing their rebuttals in an instant, talking over each other in quick explanations and excuses.

"It's okay," Dream interrupts, before the argument gets too heated. "I'll go back. George has to stay with Sapnap, though."



The other two go quiet, and Dream stands up, careful not to nudge George's wing. He steps forward, and turns to Sapnap.

"Don't let him out of your sight," he says, and lifts his arms, offering himself up to be cuffed.

Sapnap knows better than to argue. One wrong move and he would be on Sam's bad side, which wouldn't bode well for any of them. Sam had one of the most powerful people on the server and enough weapons to arm a small militia, and Sapnap had too much to protect. He reaches for George's hand, and holds tight.

-

Phil and Sam leave with Dream, and Sapnap and George are left to themselves. As he was being led away, Dream continuously insisted they did not follow him. George may have thought it was because he didn't want them in the prison, but Sapnap had a suspicion that Dream was worried about dying in front of them.

Though he doesn't think Sam will kill Dream, Sapnap can't help the gnawing fear gathering in his throat at the possibility. He's nervous and distant the whole way to his house, barely holding onto George's hand.

The other is hobbling like an eighty year old, his wings severely throwing off his balance. Sapnap had offered to carry him, but George had stubbornly refused, insisting that he needed to learn to walk on his own. He flinched every once in a while, when he stepped on a piece of pine cone or something sharp with his bare feet. Sapnap desperately wanted to stop every time it happened, trying to convince George to just let himself be held, but George never relented.

When they got to Sapnap's house, he immediately led the older to a seat. George was grateful, but found he could only sit in the chair sideways, as the back was uncomfortable on his wings. Sapnap apologized, and went to get him some fresh clothes.

He came back with pajama bottoms and a blanket, as he found no button-up shirts in his and Karl's closet.

"Sorry," he says, handing over the items. "I wasn't prepared for," he gestures at George's back.



George nods, and stands up. He moves towards what he can see is the bathroom, and it's only then that Sapnap can really see how dirty George is. He's still got blood on the side of his face, sand in his hair, and grass on his shirt.

"Hold on." Sapnap holds up a hand, and walks into the bathroom ahead of him.

He bends over the bathtub, plugs the drain, and turns on the water.

"Tch, that's kind of rude..." George mumbles, walking up behind him.

"Well, you have, like, the whole beach in your hair." Sapnap turns around, and begins to walk out. "I'll be just outside, yell if you need me."

The door closes with a gentle click, and George hears his friend walk away.

For the first time in months, he is truly alone.

He closes the toilet, drops the clothes on the floor, and sits down. Inhale, exhale. Reaching up, he tugs at the collar of his shirt. The buttons don't slip. How the hell is he supposed to get this shirt off?

The bathwater is loud, and he's not sure he has the nerve to actually call for Sapnap. Experimentally, he tugs his arm up the sleeve, hoping he might be able to slide the thing away. It gets about halfway up before he can bend it no further, and has to slide it back down.

Begrudgingly, George reaches behind him, wincing at the pain in his shoulders. He carefully grips the bottom button, and slides it out of its hole. Relieved it worked, he sighs, and continues.

George gets about five buttons before he finds he can't reach any more, and tries ripping the rest. They don't come out, he barely has enough strength to snap a string. George groans, and it's only then that he realizes the bathtub has completely filled, and is dangerously close to running over.



He doesn't wait a second longer. "Sapnap, help!"

Embarrassment was okay in this situation, he supposed. His friend comes rushing in, and George watches him process what's happening, eventually struggling to stifle a grin as he fits all the pieces together.

"Are you stuck?" He sounds all too happy about this.

"Yes, idiot. Turn the bathtub off, it's going to flood," George replies, already sick of this situation.

Sapnap leans over and shuts the water off, before turning back to him. He giggles a bit at how ridiculous George looks.

George rolls his eyes in retaliation.

"Okay, okay. Turn around, then," Sapnap says, reaching out.

George turns, and sighs as the buttons are finally undone. He flexes his shoulders a bit, and tries lifting his wings. They respond like any other muscle, but he's still surprised when they move on command.

"Holy shit," Sapnap hisses from behind him.

He turns back at that, and his friend is looking at him with wide, excited eyes. "That's so fucking cool," he proclaims.

George can't help the small smile that ghosts his lips at the compliment, and shrugs. "I guess so."

Sapnap stares a while longer, pausing to admire the wings like art in a museum. Finally, he blinks, and looks back to George. "Uh, okay. Is that all then?" he asks, stepping back, implying his retreat.

Something jumps in George's chest, and he snaps back. "No."



His friend stops, waiting for an explanation George doesn't have. "Okay...so, what else?" he asks.

George looks down, to where his pants still cover his hips. Without much thought, he steps into the bathtub, still halfway clothed.

"George! What are you-"

"Pleasestaywithme."

It all comes out in one exhale, and George is suddenly very aware of his own breathing. He stands there dumbly, the bottoms of his pants soaked, and crosses his arms over his chest.

Sapnap's face softens, and he steps forward, stopping just before the bathtub.

"Okay," he says, watching George relax at his acceptance. "I'm sitting down, though."

George sinks down with him, and the water is just a bit too warm for his liking. He hisses as it burns his legs, and Sapnap watches, concerned.

"Do you want to drain some of it and add cold?" he asks.

George shakes his head. "Just give me a second."

He guesses he should have expected it, Sapnap's version of warm was obviously going to be hot. The boy could literally hold fire like it was nothing. Eventually, he sits down the rest of the way, letting his legs come out from under him.

The problem arises when he realizes his wings don't fit in the tub, and he has to rest them awkwardly over the side. The edge of one hits Sapnap in the face, and George sighs, apologetic.

"These things seem like kind of a hassle," Sapnap points out, moving to accommodate the wings.



George nods. Words could not begin to explain how much he agrees with that statement.

They sit there in silence for a while, just relaxing in each other's company. Sapnap gives George a bar of soap, and the older tries his best to wash himself. He doesn't take the pants off, he'll worry about that later. He can't exactly wash his back or wings, but he makes due. It clearly bothers him though, so Sapnap offers his help.

George accepts it, and that's how Sapnap ends up sitting between his wings, a bucket of water in one hand, and a brush in the other. He'd been itching to see George's hair clean ever since they'd reunited, and he just knew it would make the brunette feel better.

"Alright, tip your head back. Look up," he says, placing a hand on George's forehead.

George does as he's told, and Sapnap pushes back his hair, not wanting to get water on his face. He carefully tips the water from the bucket, his friend squeezes his eyes shut.

The flow stops, and Sapnap checks in, just in case. "It's not too hot, right?"

George shakes his head slightly, eyes still shut.

*Okay*, Sapnap thinks, and continues to pour.

He empties the bucket, occasionally working his fingers into George's hair to make sure it actually gets wet. He watches sand and dirt wash out of it, even a few blades of grass fall out before he's finished pouring. George reaches up and rubs at the side of his face, dried blood finally flaking off.

Sapnap sets the empty bucket to the side, and grabs the comb he'd brought over. With his other hand he takes a bottle of soap, and squeezes some onto the dark hair.

George's eyes flutter open, and he sits up slightly. Sapnap lets him adjust, waiting for him to settle again before he continues.



George does get comfortable, and Sapnap get's back to work. He puts down the soap, and lathers it into George's hair, fingers tangling in the dark strands. It's suddenly clear that it'll be some time before he can use the comb on it, and so he puts the thing down, and uses both hands to work the grease and debris out. George visibly relaxes, his wings going limp against the side of the tub. Sapnap takes that as a compliment.

It takes him about fifteen minutes to work the big knots out, and George looks nearly asleep by the time he's done. Sapnap reaches for the comb again, and the tool makes it about an inch into George's hair before catching. He pulls slightly, and the tangle comes out.

"Tell me if I'm too rough," he says to George, who mumbles a barely audible 'okay' in response.

Sapnap continues to comb through George's hair, redistributing and smoothing it out methodically, like he's done it a million times before. George responds with different hums every once in a while, to imply when something feels nice, or when something hurts. It's quite a personal process, but eventually his hair is soft and tangle-free again.

"Look up again," Sapnap says, dipping the bucket back into the water, refilling it.

George does, and Sapnap carefully rinses his hair out, brushing it as the water runs through. Soap and grease and blood wash out, and Sapnap can see the relief flood George's face.

"All done," he announces, and George lets out a sigh.

The brunette sits up again, gripping the sides of the tub for balance. He turns slightly, looking at Sapnap.

"Thank you."

Sapnap smiles fondly. "You're welcome, George."

He begins to stand, and reaches up to where a towel hangs by the shower. He drops it next to the bathtub, and looks down to George.



George goes to get out, but Sapnap holds up a hand. "Take a shower first, then get dressed. You can hang the pants over there," He points to the towel rack. "I'm gonna go make food."

George looks up, listening. When Sapnap finishes, he nods. "Okay."

"Yell if you need me."

Sapnap turns and leaves, and George is alone again. He reaches under the water, and unplugs the bathtub, listening to the way the water rushes out. He stands and his pants are extremely weighed down by the water.

He undresses completely, and throws them over the towel rack, as he'd been asked to. The water is ankle deep at this point, and he reaches down to turn it back on, this time pulling the switch that turns on the shower.

Lukewarm water falls over him in gentle droplets, and he pulls his wings in close so that they also get washed. They're becoming a bit heavy, but he wants them to be clean. Water slips and slides off the wax coating his feathers, collecting dirt and grime on its way. He sighs happily, it feels great.

He finishes up quickly, and steps out feeling like he's lost 10 pounds of dirt. He pulls on the pants Sapnap let him borrow, and turns to look in the mirror.

He barely recognizes himself.

His hair is long and choppy, and he's extremely pale. Every bit of him, spare the slowly darkening half circles under his eyes, is practically white. He's thin and wracked by fatigue, like the human equivalent of the hour hand in a clock. Two dark wings, covered in newly grown feathers that were still pinning, stuck out from behind him. His face seems to have completely changed shape.

It scares him, but he doesn't know what he thinks he should look like. There's nothing he can do, and somehow that brings him a bit of comfort. It's like knowing you're forgetting something but not knowing what it is, it's not the worst feeling in the world.

He looks to the side, where what he assumes is a medicine cabinet is fastened to the wall. He pulls it open, and finds what he's looking for.



He grasps for the pair of scissors, bringing them up and out of the cup they rest in, with the rest of the hair supplies.

He doesn't hesitate. He lifts a wet strand of hair from where its resting on his forehead, positions the scissors just around it,

and cuts.

#### Chapter End Notes

don't yell at me i gave you georgenap. hope you all are doing well. might have to add more chapters.



## XV

### Chapter Summary

more goergenap to feed the soul

### Chapter Notes

hello gang, sorry i've been gone. Got possessed by a young Victorian child. anyways, enjoy the chapter :]

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

The day goes by and George and Sapnap take care of themselves. After George's impromptu haircut, Sapnap sits him down on the porch outside and they spend the rest of the night fixing up his hair.

"You really went at it, damn."

"Needed the change," George reasons, and who's Sapnap to argue?

He continues snipping away at the brown fluff, still wet from the shower. He doesn't know how well he's actually doing, but the jagged edges seem to be evening out at least a little bit.

George wouldn't mind if Sapnap made him bald. The further away he gets from looking like what DreamXD made him, the better. He has a plate of food on his lap, though it's less than he actually wants to eat because Sapnap said that he should take it slow while increasing his intake. Chewing and swallowing has never seemed like such a chore before, his jaw has gotten weak over the past few months.

Sapnap stops snipping suddenly, and steps back to look at his work.

"You sort of look like a mole," he confesses.



George chokes on his cornbread, scrunching up his eyebrows in amused confusion. “What?”

Sapnap tries to look apologetic, but George can tell he’s holding back a laugh too. “I’m sorry.”

They both crack at that, Sapnap folding his arms across his stomach, George holding onto his knees, laughing like kids at a school lunch table.

The sun rises around the house, and they’ve found each other again.

-

It’s a quiet day; they’re both too tired to do much. George busies himself by looking around the place his friend has turned into a home, and Sapnap busies himself with watching him. Every once in a while, he’ll comment on something George is staring at, and George will ask him when he had time to do all this, and Sapnap will feel a small pang of guilt at not investigating his absence for so long. George doesn’t blame him though, or at least doesn’t show any resentment.

They make soup for lunch, and George eats more than he should, much to Sapnap’s dismay. He spends the next hour lying on the couch, his face pressed into the knitted blankets underneath him. Sapnap keeps a close eye on him while he cleans the kitchen. It occurs to him that they could really use some new silverware, and he smiles. He’s finally found a gift idea.

Speaking of that...

“Hey George, do you wanna see the fire pit?”

George groans in pain from his spot on the couch, and pushes himself up from the blankets.

“I’m not sure I have it in me,” he says. And then, after a moment, “You have a fire pit?”

Sapnap grins, and walks over to where George is struggling to sit up. “Yeah, Karl made it for me.”

He holds out his hand. “Come on.”



They make their way into the backyard, and Sapnap holds out his arms, as if he's at the big reveal of a new restaurant, or something of that manner.

"Behold!" he yells, and George sighs in faux annoyance at his theatrics.

His friend spins in a circle, a mischievous grin gracing his features. His next words are confident, practiced.

"My motherfucking fire pit."

Sapnap lifts his arms then, and an unnecessarily large pillar of fire shoots into the air behind him. It climbs into the sky, hoists itself above the trees, and settles just before the lowest of the clouds. It burns a bright orange, the colour bright enough to put the sun to shame. George stumbles back when he sees it. Not out of fear, but out of surprise.

He's sure he looks stupefied right now, but he can't help it. He's never seen Sapnap summon something so big.

The rush of hot air collapses around them both then, and Sapnap closes his eyes, enjoying the heat. The flames writhe like bright angry snakes behind him, but he keeps them in check. They twist and swirl in beautiful patterns that George has never seen before.

"S-Sapnap?" he asks, incredulous. He can barely be heard over the gasping flames.

"Do you like it?" Sapnap yells back, opening his eyes to see George's reaction.

"It's- This is crazy!" George shouts, somewhere between astonished and uncertain.

His friend smiles and drops his arms, making his way over to where George is standing. The pillar drops slightly in altitude, now lacking the attention that's vital to its existence.

Near George's feet, there is a small pile of logs and other various kindling. Sapnap grabs one of the



logs and hands it to him. He picks up another, and starts walking back towards the flames.

He turns to look back when he notices George isn't following him.

"Throw it in, it's fun!"

He waves George forward, and then tosses his own log into the fire. Flames jump at it before it's even fully fallen into them, licking black marks onto the bark of what used to be a tree. George hears the wood hiss as it burns, and suddenly feels the need to be a lot more careful.

He stops where he is, and looks to Sapnap.

"Is everything alright?"

George nods, and throws his wood in. It turns in the air, disappearing behind the fire without a sound. Bright flames jump out from where it landed, and grow stronger for about ten seconds before falling back to the way they burnt before.

He lets out the breath he's been holding. It feels good, watching it burn.

A hand settles on his shoulder. "I told you."

George smiles at Sapnap, and looks back to the fire.

"I didn't know you could do this," he says.

Sapnap hums. "I've been working on being better with it. Can't do this often, though," he gestures at the flames, "It wears me out."

George can see why. It's wearing him out just standing next to it.



Sapnap looks back to the pile of logs and branches. “Do you want to...?”

George nods, and that’s how they spend the rest of the day. The pile of sticks and logs steadily shrinks, and the fire levels out. They converse about what’s been going on while he’s been gone, and Sapnap spends about thirty minutes discussing Karl and his tendencies to leave socks around the house. It’s lighthearted and soft, something George hasn’t had in a while. Sapnap doesn’t make him talk about anything that happened, and he doesn’t offer the topic.

At some point, an idea dawns on the brunette, and he can’t pass it up.

“Uh, hey,” George starts, putting his hand against the fabric over his leg, “can I keep these?”

Sapnap furrows his eyebrows, and looks down. “The pants?”

George hums.

“Yeah, of course you can.”

George goes to stand, and before Sapnap can ask him where he’s going, he’s gone back inside.

Confused and unsure of what to do next, Sapnap stands and tries to figure out what he did wrong. He doesn’t have to wait long though, because his friend is running back out from the house in less than a minute, gripping a damp pair of pants, the ones he’d been wearing when they’d found him.

“George?”

Before he can ask for an explanation, the pants are flying past his face, and into the fire. He whips around and watches them disappear into the flames, and blinks, confused.

He turns back to George, who’s gaze hasn’t left the fire.

“What was that?” he asks.



George looks back to him, and Sapnap can tell that something has shifted.

“I’m sorry,” George sighs, and his arms fall limply to his sides.

Sapnap steps closer to him, but George backs away. “That was stupid,” he says, bringing a hand up to his face.

His wings are drawn up behind him, and it takes Sapnap a second to realize that they’re shaking.

George lets out a small noise, and when he closes his eyes a tear slips down his face. Sapnap moves closer again, and this time George doesn’t have the energy to reject his advances.

Sapnap doesn’t touch him, but the intent is there.

“It wasn’t stupid,” he says.

George leans forward then, and Sapnap gets the hint. He wraps his arms around the older, and insists again,

”That wasn’t stupid.”

-

Karl doesn’t come home, so Sapnap lets George sleep in their bed. He won’t say it, but it makes him nervous to not have the brunette in his line of sight. George flops down on the left side, facing outwards. Sapnap can tell he’s trying not to take up too much space, but wouldn’t mind the adjustment if George would just stop waking him up in the form of shoving a waxed feather into his face.

At some point, when the tossing and tuning has become too much for both of them, Sapnap folds, and slides his legs over the side of the bed, getting up early. George, feeling guilty, waits for him to leave before gradually pulling himself out too.



He finds him in the kitchen, searching the fridge for breakfast.

“I’m sorry for hitting you,” he says, tiredness weighing down his voice.

Sapnap straightens up, and looks back at him. “It’s okay, go back to bed George.”

He waits for the brunette to turn around and start back to their room, but he doesn’t. He just stands there, rubbing his eyes.

“George...?”

The older looks up. “I’m not tired,” he tries. The lie is so obvious though, and he knows it.

Sapnap walks over, and puts his hand on George’s shoulders. “You definitely are.”

George tries to shake his head, but Sapnap is already turning him back in the direction of their room. “Go, sleep.”

George is still for a moment, and for a second Sapnap’s not sure he hasn’t passed out right there, standing up. Before he can ask, though, George is pushing past him into the kitchen.

“I’m not tired Sapnap, stop treating me like a baby,” he sighs, going to sit at the table.

Sapnap pauses at the words, and thinks carefully before speaking again. He stares at George for a moment, watching him struggle to sit on one of their backed chairs, forcing his wings to fold awkwardly behind him. Sapnap can barely make out his face in the dark, but the grey circles forming around George’s eyes have become so prominent that it doesn’t matter.

George notices his staring, and frowns. “What?” he snaps.

Sapnap takes a breath.



“George, have you *slept* since you got back?” he asks, not moving from his spot outside the kitchen.

George’s face changes then, and he looks almost surprised. The expression is gone in a second though, dulling down into something unreadable. He doesn’t answer, and that’s how Sapnap knows he’s done something wrong.

He struggles to think of something to say, something to add that would make this better. He could try backtracking, or reasoning. He doesn’t think either of those options would fix anything, though. Still, he has to say something. But by the time he comes up with the words, George has stopped looking at him, staring blankly down at the table. It takes all the fight out of him.

It’s as if a wall has been put up. Or maybe it was already there. All Sapnap knows is that he’s walked face-first into it, and doesn’t know how to proceed.

So he doesn’t.

He settles down at the table, and sits in solemn silence with his friend.

They spend the rest of the night that way, or at least until Sapnap can’t help but lay his head down and fall asleep.

-

George’s eyes have only grown darker by the next morning.

## Chapter End Notes

btw we gonna have to add some more chapters. i can’t believe this thing is still going.  
also, side note: do not buy young living candles. they suck. that is all. hope everyone’s doing well lol.



## End Notes

heya, thank you for reading. angst time woo yeah woo yeah. if you liked this, maybe leave a comment, that would be super cool and funky of you, they make my day. constructive criticism is great too, i'm trying to improve. hope everyone's doing well :]

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